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The ascendency of Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia

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The Ascendency of Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia

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Abstract

This is a study of religious conditions, especially of Buddhism, in ancient Southeast Asia before the eleventh century. A history of Buddhism in this area is yet to be written. Buddhism is usually mentioned in a passing manner in books on general history of Southeast Asia. Its early history in the region is assumed by scholars as beginning with the spread of Hīnayāna schools, followed by Mahāyāna and culminating in the ascendency of Theravāda Buddhism starting from the eleventh century. However, the data, both epigraphical and archaeological, show that this was not the case. Religious conditions in Southeast Asia should be divided into two zones; the western one comprising the Pyu, Mon and Dvāravatī traditions, and the eastern zone comprising the Khmer, Cham and Javanese traditions. The former one appears to have been Buddhist, especially of the Theravāda tradition since an early date, around the fourth century A.D. The latter appears to have been much influenced by Brahmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism, but not without traces of Hīnayāna schools. Inscriptions and archaeological remains also reveal that peoples of Southeast Asia accepted and practiced numerous creeds concurrently without conflict, even though nowadays we denote Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand as strictly Theravāda Buddhist countries. People do not restrict themselves to "Theravāda Buddhism" in order to express their religiosity, and the same situation seems to have been true in ancient times. "Theravāda Buddhism" is always presented by scholars as having attained its supremacy in these countries only

after the eleventh century; in fact it has been the most important creed in the western zone of mainland Southeast Asia since the fourth century. Therefore, the assertion that the conversion to "Theravāda Buddhism" of King Aniruddha and King Rāmkhamhaeng was the principal reason for the ascendency of Theravāda Buddhism should be reconsidered.

P. S. Jaini

The Ascendency of Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia

To my ‘pañcaratna:’

the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha;

my parents and my teachers.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Artibus Asiae
AC	Asian Culture
AI	Ancient India
Acta A.	Acta Asiatica
AP	Asian Perspectives
APSR	The American Political Science Review
Art Bull.	Art Bulletin
AS	Asian Survey
ARASB	Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey, Burma Cycle
ARASI	Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India
BCAI	Bulletin de la Commission Archéologique de l'Indo-Chine
BEFEO	Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient
Bijdragen	Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde
BMAG	Burlington Magazine
BSEI	Bulletin de la Société des Études Indochinoises, Nouvelle série
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BT	Bulletin of Tibetology
Cah. his. mond.	Cahiers d'histoire mondiale
Cah. E-A	Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie
CHJ	Ceylon Historical Journal (Dehavela)
CJHS	Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies (Paradeniya)
CJS	Ceylon Journal of Science
GJ	Geographical Journal
Eas Bud	Eastern Buddhist
EB	Epigraphia Birmanica
EHS	Epigraphical and Historical Studies, JSS
EI	Epigraphia Indica
EOGHLUCE	Ba Shin, Boisselier, Jean and Griswald, A.B., ed. 1966. *Essays Offered to G.H. Luce: by his colleagues and friends in honour of his seventy-fifth birthday.*
ER	Encyclopaedia of Religions
ESEA	Early South East Asia
EZ	Epigraphia Zeylanica
HJAS	Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
HOR	History of Religions
IAC	Indo-Asian Culture
IAHA	International Association of Historians of Asia
IC	Inscriptions du Cambodge
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly
IIJ	Indo-Iranian Journal
ILUP	Conference de l'Institut de Linguistique de l'Université de Paris
Ind. A.L.	Indian Arts and Letters
Ind. Ant.	Indian Antiquary
Ind. Cul.	Indian Culture
Ind. For. Rev	Indian Foreign Review
IT	Inscriptions in Thailand (Charuk nay Prathet Thai)

JA	Journal Asiatique
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JAS	Journal of the Asiatic Society
JBPP	Journal of Bihar Paravid Parishad
JBRS	Journal of the Burma Research Society
JGIS	Journal of Greater Indian Society
JIABS	Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies
JIBS	Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies (Indogaku Bukkyogaku Kenkyu)
JOAS	Journal of Asian Studies
JOSA	Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
JRASCB	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Ceylon Branch
JRASMB	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Malaya Branch
JSEAS	Journal of Southeast Asia Studies
JSS	Journal of the Siam Society
Mal. Hist.	Malaysia in History
MB	Muang Boran
MCB	Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques
Oriental Art	Auboyer, Jeannine; Beurdeley, Michel; Boisselier, Jean; Rousset, Huguette; Massonaud, Chantal. 1980. *Oriental Art: A Handbook of Styles and Forms.*
Pac. Aff.	Pacific Affairs
PEW	Philosophy East and West
Prachum	Prachum Silacharuk
PSFT	Premier Symposium Franco-Thaï. La Thaïlande des débuts de son histoire au XVème siècle.
RCESEA	Research Conference on Early Southeast Asia. Bangkok & Nakhon Pathom. 8-13 Apr 1985.
SII	Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik
SIS	Sino-Indian Studies
TBG	Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, uitgegeven door het Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen
TC	Tamil Culture
TP	T'oung Pao
ZRG	Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Problems and Scope

The title "The Ascendency of Theravāda Buddhism" arose as a result from reading several books concerning the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. Most of them present Theravāda Buddhism as a "revival" or even an "introduction" of Buddhism into Southeast Asia. This event is supposed to have happened in the eleventh century in Burma and in the thirteenth century in Thailand. Two great kings were connected to the event, King Aniruddha of Pagan and King Rāmkhamhaeng of Sukhothai.

Opinions on the status of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia can be roughly classified into two categories. The first category is that before the eleventh century Theravāda Buddhism was but a small, uninfluential schools among several schools of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. Then it was because these two great kings had chosen to adopt this creed that Theravāda Buddhism became a national or state religion of Burma and Thailand.

The second opinion is that Theravāda Buddhism did not reached Southeast Asia until the beginning of the eleventh century. It was introduced to these two kings and then became the state religion.

In both case it is obvious that these scholars see Theravāda Buddhism in ascending to its status in Southeast Asia from that time onward.

The concept dictates the writing of a history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. A book on this subject, if it mentions the period before the eleventh century at all, would

divided into two parts. The first part treating what is usually called "early" Buddhism in Southeast Asia; the second, history of Theravāda Buddhism from King Aniruddha's reign in case of Burma, and from King Ramkhamhaeng's in case of Thailand.

Regretfully, most of them do not dealing with early Buddhism. A history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia would start of with the introduction of Buddhism from the Aśoka's time. The issue has been extensively discussed in most works. But the account usually centers upon the problem of identification of Suvārṇabhūmi, one of the destination, which had been said to be somewhere in Southeast Asia, of the mission sent in the Aśokan time. However, the fate of Buddhism after the introduction has never been really received the deserved attention. And if it is mentioned at all, the description is that of the situation right before its 'ascendency.' This period is seen as the "wane of Buddhism" by Luce:

> About this time Buddhism was almost everywhere on the wane. In Sung China, during the 11th century, the recoil from Buddhism set in with the rise of Neo-Confucianism. In Tibet, the 'Red Hat sect' of Padmasambhava had relapsed into demonolatry, before the Pandit Atīśa (an older contemporary of Aniruddha) came and introduced Tāntric Mahāyānism of Pāla Bengal. In North India, Muslim armies were continually raiding from the west. In 1033-4 the Ghaznzvid general Ahmad sacked Benares. In 1039 the Chedi prince Karnadeva invaded the Buddhist Pāla kingdom of Bihar (*Magadha*). Kyanzittha's latest Prome inscription (c.1105 A.D.) says that (at some date, unspecified) the *Vajrāsana* temple of Bodhgayā, the very heart of Buddhism, had been "irremediably destroyed by other kings". In East Bengal (Samataṭa, 'the level country'), from the beginning of the 11th century, says Bhattasali, "Buddhism had begun to decline with the fall of the Candras." In the Deccan, Buddhism was yielding almost everywhere before the revival of Brahmanism; and the split between *Mahāyāna* and the southern schools of Theravāda, etc., was ever widening. In South India, early in the 10th century the Śaivite Cola empire arose, holding for a time most of the country south of Kistna. The Colas were strong at sea. Between 1017 and 1070 they rules most of Ceylon; but from about 1050 the Sinhalese prince *Kīrti* (afterward *Vijayabāhu I*) led a desperate revolt against them, from the south and the center of the island. In 1025 the Colas (Srī Vijaya), including the north of Sumatra and the mainland up to the Isthmus of Kra. Of all that great Buddhist kingdom which I-tsing had admired so much in the 7th

> century, little remained except *Nagara Srī Dharmarāja* (Ligor) on the east of the coast, just south of Kra. *Dvāravatī*, the Theravāda stronghold in Lower Siam, the source of Mon inscriptions 400 hundred years before the first in Burma, fell to the Khmers early in the 11th century. The Śaivite court of Angkor (*Mahānagara*) under Sūryavarman I, occupied Lopburi; and between 1002-1050 extended Cambojan rule over much of Siam. There is no evidence, I think, that they persecuted Buddhism; but they are not likely to have supported it. They even tried as we shall see, to invade Burma. -In this perilous period Buddhism was saved only by such valiant fighters as Vijayabāhu in Ceylon and Aniruddha in Burma, and by such ardent reformers as Pandit Atīśa in Tibet, and in Burma Shin Arahan.[1]

In short the presence of Buddhism especially Theravāda before Aniruddha or Ramkhamhaeng was so insignificant. And this "fact" enhances the theory of the rising of Theravāda Buddhism in the eleventh century as well as the fame of these two kings. Actually the word "decline" cannot be applied to Buddhism in the Sung China. In that dynasty we see the beginning of the printing of Tripiṭaka. China at that time was still the source of Buddhism for Korea and Japan. Neither can we say that in Dvāravatī Mahāyāna superseded Theravāda Buddhism. Inscriptions show that the Khmer king recognized Theravāda Buddhism as one of the main creeds of his kingdom. This kind of opinion has then been formulated into a paradigm for the history of Southeast Asia. The paradigm begins with the presence of Hīnayāna schools, Theravāda is sometimes included, sometimes excluded, followed by Mahāyāna and culminating in the ascending of Theravāda Buddhism.

On the other hand, if we read the Buddhist chronicles such as the *Sāsanavamsa*, the *Cāmadevīvamsa*, the *Jinakālamālinī* we have another picture of the situation. Theravāda Buddhism was seen as a continuity of Buddhism in the region rather than an introduction.

In answering these questions one cannot do otherwise except for studying the situation before the period mentioned. If there was such an event occurred at that

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[1]Luce, (1969), I: 13-14.

time, the best way to understand it is to know the circumstance before that event happened. We shall demonstrate that the prevailing paradigm of the religious situation in Southeast Asia described above was not in accordance with the data.

In doing research of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia, one first confronts two terms, Southeast Asia and Theravāda Buddhism. Because these two terms have been used in different contexts, their meanings are varied and contain many nuances. And with these meanings and nuances come the misunderstanding and misinterpretation due to the fact that these terms are scarcely defined when they are used. We shall try to limit their meanings for the purpose of studying our project.

"Southeast Asia"

The term was first used in an Austrian geographical magazine as early as 1900, but became popular only after the Second World War. It was used at first probably as a geographical terms. And later it was appropriated by scholars of other disciplines such as History, Sociology and Anthropology. The area by which the term covers includes countries of different ethnic groups and cultures. This fact has raised the question that it cannot be studied as one region. Henry Benda, one of the pioneer in Southeast Asian studies, opines on the point that

> One of the first problems deserving our attention in the delineation of Southeast Asia. What is it? Is it merely a geographic convenience, or was it born of the need to define operational theatres during the Second World War? What should it include, what exclude? By commonly, if tacitly, accepted definition, Southeast Asia has nowadays apparently come to embrace Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaya and Indonesia. The Philippines appear to constitute the borderline case, seeing that they are i.a. excluded from Professor Hall's massive standard work. Pakistan has found its way not only into the so-called Southeast Asia Treaty Organization but also into some recent books devoted to 'Southeast Asia', while Ceylon, which might be a far more appropriate candidate, has usually been left to our 'South Asian' colleagues.

> This uncertainty is ample proof of the difficulty, or even the impossibility, of subsuming Southeast Asia in terms of an integral civilization, like those of India, China, Korea and Japan. The perplexing ethnic, linguistic, and religious divisions which prevail throughout the area only underline the difficulties confronting us. However, diversity in and of itself need not be an insurmountable barrier to our efforts at generalization, since the diversity of Europe has not prevented more or less meaningful generalization about the general-and the generic-course of its history. ....[2]

We can see that the term is used differently among scholars, even those who are in the same field. Geographically Southeast Asia usually conceived as having two regions, the mainland, and the archipelago. The main source of the difficulties seems to be the application of the term to study the region culturally. There is an attempt to divide Southeast Asia into two parts, using cultures as principle. The first consists of Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and the insular region. And the second consists of Vietnam. Since the first is culturally "Indian," it has been "Indianized." The second is "Chinese," it has been "Sinicized". The division is rather inaccurate. Since numerous area of Vietnam were also "Indianized."

For want of an adequate principle to delineate the area of Southeast Asia we shall have to rely on our own. Since this work proposes to make a research on ancient Buddhism in the area, we shall have to use Buddhism as the norm in limiting the area. We shall deal only with areas where Buddhist culture is present. This will include Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, parts of Vietnam which were formerly under the Cham culture and Indonesia. There is one pitfall here. The political boundaries of the present era cannot be used, for at that early ages ancient civilizations of Southeast Asia did not divide themselves as Thailand, Burma etc.

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[2] Benda, (1972/1962), pp. 122-123.

"Buddhism"

Using the term "Buddhism" we also confront with another set of problems. Since it is a cultural as well as a religious term, it is impregnated with history, development, and the process of acculturation. The most important point is that it is imported into Southeast Asia. Moreover, it comes to this region together with other Indian cultures. We cannot neglect Hinduism, nor can we disregard indigenous beliefs. The process of the spreading of Indian cultures as a whole has been termed "Indianization." And this too has its own problem.

Limiting the scope just to the word "Buddhism", we do not find ourselves in an easier position, since Buddhism has a long history. It comprises not only Theravāda Buddhism, but numerous schools. These schools have been grouped and designated with different names in different periods. And the most difficult of all, there is certainly no one principle to name them.

The most common division that we find in most of the books on Buddhism is between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. The first is a derogatory term understood to be used by the Mahāyāna to designate other schools which are not Mahāyāna. However, the word "Hīnayāna" scarcely appears in the Mahāyāna scriptures.[3] The terms which they use to refer to other schools than Mahāyāna are "Śrāvakayāna" and "Pratyekabuddhayāna". Even the term Mahāyāna itself is rarely used, the common term is "Buddhayāna."[4]

Traditionally there are seventeen schools of Buddhism before the Mahāyāna movement. Among them there are two main groups, the Sthavīras and the Mahāsanghikas. They both again are divided into subgroups in which there are different schools. "Theravāda" is one among them. It usually stands for Buddhism in

[3]The term appears in Suvarṇaprabhāṣottamasūtra, and in the Mahāvyutpatti, which is a glossary of Buddhist terms.

[4]See for example in the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka

Sri Lanka.[5] But there is also confusion here. Some scholars are reluctant to use the word "Hīnayāna," since it signifies the "Low" vehicle. They instead take the word "Theravāda" to signify Buddhist schools which do not belong to the Mahāyāna. In this case "Theravāda" has the same meaning as its Sanskrit counterpart "Sthavīravāda." However, the word does not include the Mahāsanghika, thus it is rather inadequate if we want to contrast other schools from Mahāyāna. The word "Hīnayāna", derogatory or not, can serve a purpose here, if we want to separate all other schools of Buddhism from the Mahāyāna.

Again, if we take languages used in the scriptures as a principle to divide them, we have three languages to take into account; Sanskrit, Buddhist Sanskrit and Pāli. The latter is rather used exclusively by the Theravāda. Sanskrit and Buddhist Sanskrit are used by different schools of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. We might think that in that case we can say that Theravāda is "Pāli Buddhism." The situation is however not that simple, since we do find some inscriptions using Pāli which may or may not belong to the Theravādins.[6] Moreover, when the term "Theravāda" is used to denote Buddhism in Sri Lanka which had three main schools, the "Mahāvihāra," the "Abhayagiri" and the "Jetavana," the Abhayagiri school is reported to have been using Sanskrit as a sacred language for sometimes. Therefore, to equate "Theravāda" to "Pāli Buddhism" will not help clear the confusion.

We cannot define all these terms here. In this research the term "Theravāda Buddhism" shall be used when we have evidence that the practices are derived from the Pāli canon especially the Abhidhammapiṭaka. In case that the evidence is in Pāli, but it is not definitely assigned as quoting from the Pāli canon, the word "Pāli

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[5]For a study of schools of Hīnayāna see Bareau, (1955); Lamotte, (1958), pp. 571 ff.

[6]See *EI*, XX.

Buddhism" will be used. To specify Theravāda of Sri Lanka, the words Sri Lanka or Sinhalese will be prefixed to Theravāda.

Though the title has the term "Theravāda Buddhism", this research will not deal with only this particular school of Buddhism, rather the ascending of this schools as substantiated by scholars will be taken as a culminate point or the temporal limit for the study. Our investigation will be on the history of Buddhism as a whole, with emphasis on Theravāda Buddhism.

"Ascendency"

With these two terms we have limited our work geographically and conceptually, by the word "Ascendency" we shall limit the time. Since the prevailing belief now is that the advent of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia started around the eleventh century to thirteenth century.[7] The period on which we shall concentrate upon will be from the introduction of Buddhism into Southeast Asia up to that time.

In the course of researching we wish to discern the development, the structure of Buddhism, especially of Theravāda Buddhism. And to study the circumstance by which Theravāda came to attain its present status in Southeast Asia. And also to investigate whether the account given by Luce is true or not.

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[7]See for example, N. Ray, (1946), p. 45. "In fact it seems that it was not till the middle of the twelfth century that Ceylon came to play any important role in the history of Buddhism in Burma. It was in 1167 that Panthagu, the then Primate of the Burmese kingdom, chose Ceylon as his refuge, and in 1180 Uttarajīva, the Primate who succeeded Panthagu, returned from a pilgrimage to Ceylon as the "First Pilgrim of Ceylon." In 1190 Capata, Uttarajīva's disciple, earned the title of the "Second Pilgrim to Ceylon." On his return tried to convert the whole realm to the Sinhalese form. These missions coupled with Capata's attempts to Sinhalese Burmese Buddhism led to the gradual predominance of Sinhalese Buddhism in Burma and wiping out of even the memory of the original source." What he means by "original source" is the "eastern Deccan and the Far South" of India. We do not object his opinion here, but cannot accept that Buddhism in Sri Lanka did not have any impact on the situation of early Buddhism in Burma at all. He seems to have been obsessed by the history of the Sinhalese Sangha, rather than Sinhalese Buddhism. Of course, we do not possess any data before those Theras' going to Sri Lanka. But neither do we have any data on any Theras' going to eastern Deccan and the Far South of India. For the area other than Burma, see Saddhatissa (1972), p. 211. He describes the situation as follows: "although Buddhism was soon well established in Ceylon, there are very few historical references to Buddhist contact with mainland South-East Asia. In fact it was Mahāyāna form of Buddhism that first penetrated the mainland kingdoms direct from India. However the first contact was made before 1000 A.C. [sic].." See also Charles F. Keyes, (1977); Paranavitana, (1932), p. 191.

Source Materials

Primary Sources

They are epigraphical and archaeological data. These data are by no means complete. Data from different countries are published in different places, and in different languages. There are also problems concerning unequal scholarship in different countries. Even if the period which we will study is not by any ways limited by the present political boundaries, our sources are profoundly, or rather seriously affected by political situation in these countries of Southeast Asia. We used to have a good amount of data from Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam in the colonial era. But nowadays due to the unrest in these countries, studies on epigraphical and archaeological data from them are in a deplorable state. On the other hands data in Thailand have received more attention. Our concern will be only with the inscriptions and archaeological finds dating before the thirteenth century.

Epigraphical Data

Our epigraphical data from Burma are all from the series *Epigraphia Birmanica.* Unfortunately, religious inscriptions which consist of a short passage or a verse from a text are not included in this series. Neither do they appear in the list of inscriptions found in Burma called "Inventaire des Inscriptions Pālies, Sanskrites, Mon et Pyu," prepared by Charles Duroiselle. They are essential to our study because they are of earlier date (fourth century onward) than those which are published in *Epigraphia Birmanica*, (eleventh century onward.) We do not have any report on recently discovered inscriptions in Burma. Some of the studies of these inscriptions appear in *Annual Report of Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report of Archaeological survey, Burma Cycle* and also in the *Journal of the Burma Research Society*. Some

selected reports on inscriptions found in Burma are listed in the selected bibliography in N. Ray's *An Introduction to the Study of Theravāda Buddhism in Burma.*

Epigraphical data in Thailand had been studies and published by George Coedès. But he edited only two parts of the series, called *Prachum Silacharuk.* These two are the only data available in a western language, i.e. French. The rest from the third volume onward are published by the government of Thailand, but they are all in Thai script and translated into Thai only. Our main sources are from these first three volumes. Recently a new publication of inscriptions from the series mentioned and the newly discovered ones have been edited and in some cases re-deciphered and re-translated. This was a project subsidized by the National Library. The publication's title is *Charuk nay Prathet Thai* (Inscriptions in Thailand). It consists of five volumes, arranged by the script used in the inscriptions. The first comprises inscriptions in "Pallava" and "Late Pallava" scripts (twelfth to fourteenth century of the Buddhist era), the second, "Pallava" and "Mon" scripts (twelfth to twenty-first century of the Buddhist era), the third, "Khmer" script (fifteenth to sixteenth century of the Buddhist era), the fourth, "Khmer" script (seventeenth to eighteenth century of the Buddhist era), the fifth, "Dharma" and "Thai" scripts (nineteenth to twenty-fourth century). We shall consult only the first three. Inscriptions of Sukhothai era has also been reprinted in a volume called *Charuk Samay Sukhothai.* All of these publications are in Thai. The only source in English for inscriptions found in Thailand appear in a series of essays by Griswold and Na Nagara "Epigraphical and Historical Studies," published in the *Journal of the Siam Society.* Most of these inscriptions are of later date i.e. from the thirteenth century onward.

Inscriptions of Khmer and Cham cultures are extensively published in French. A series of inscriptions of Cambodia was edited and translated by Coedès. This is the famous *Inscriptions du Cambodge* in seven volumes. The eighth volume is the inventory of all inscriptions in these two cultures including inscriptions which had been

published in other publications. This volume is essential to anyone who studies history of Southeast Asia. Study of these inscriptions also appears in several series of essays in *BEFEO* called "Études épigraphiques", "Notes d'épigraphies", "Études Cambodgiennes", "Études indiennes et indochinoises", etc. For newly discovered inscriptions and further studies on the old ones, we shall consult works of C. Jacques, which appear mostly in *BEFEO*. Some of the inscriptions were translated into English and published in the *Journal of the Siam Society*. In English language we have works by Majumdar, Sircar and Jenner.

In case of Indonesia, the Prasasti Indonesia in two parts by de Casparis can be used as the main source. This should be supplemented by a series of Damais's study "Études d'épigraphie indonésienne," published in *BEFEO* from volume XLV onward. Inscriptions found in Malay peninsula are published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic, Malaya Branch.*

Archaeological Data

For Burma, we have the *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey, Burma Cycle*. But the detailed studies of archaeological objects found in Burma usually appear in the *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*. Unluckily, reports on Burma had been cut off from this series after Burma became independent, and thus did not form part of India. There are some reports on the subjects in the *Journal of the Burma Research Society*. Luce's *Old Burma and Early Pagan* also provides a great wealth of data, but they are mainly after King Aniruddha's reign in the eleventh century onward. Our knowledge on Burmese archaeology now is very poor due to the political unrest in that country.

For Thailand we have more published and studied data. Apart from the classic inventories done by Lajonquière in the early twentieth century, there are several works by Coedès, Dupont and Boisselier. Two recent conferences concerning Archaeology of

Thailand prove to be very useful. They are *Premier Symposium Franco-Thaï. La Thaïlande des débuts de son histoire au XVème siècle (1988), Research Conference on Early Southeast Asia: Bangkok & Nakhon Pathom (1985). Early South East Asia*, also a result of a conference, covers archaeological studies in Thailand both prehistorical and protohistorical periods. The most recent and nearly complete one, since it covers almost all the countries in the mainland Southeast Asia, is Higham's *The Archaeological of Mainland Southeast Asia.* Newly discoveries are usually reported in two periodicals, one published by the Department of Fine Arts, the *Silapakorn*, the other is *Muang Boran.* Articles appear in the first one are usually in Thai. The second periodical has an English synopsis of articles.

For Cambodia or Khmer art in general, articles in *BEFEO* are the main source. There are also several monographs on the subject. Most of them are published by École Française d'Extrême-Orient. These are works by Pierre Dupont, Malleret, Boisselier. A book on Cambodian art from the beginning is written by Boisselier.

For archaeological data in Indonesia several works and conferences have been organized and published by SPAFA.

Local Chronicles

There is another category of the primary source, the chronicles and the local "legends." Although they are of later date, not early than the fifteenth century, they are useful because they usually contain some data on practices of Buddhism and also of indigenous beliefs. Wyatt has studied these chronicles in his article: "Chronicle Traditions in Thai Historiography." Recently a monograph on the subject, *The Buddhist Annals and Chronicles in South-East Asia with special reference to India and Ceylon*, has been published by Hazra. Some of these works such As

Cāmdevīvamsa, Jinakālamālinī, and Sāsanavamsa have been translated into French and English.

Secondary Sources

There are very few studies on the ancient history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. It is usually dealt with in books on a history of Southeast Asia in general. In fact a history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia from the beginning to the present is yet to be written. There are some topics which are always popular for scholars for a time such as the discussion on where Suvarṇabhūmi was, whether Aśoka's mission was a true story or a myth etc. But what was Buddhism in that early stage does not seem to be interesting to scholars. As a result we have a distorted picture of the situation. An example of misrepresentation of the religious situation, particularly in case of Theravāda Buddhism, in Southeast Asia can be drawn from Keyes's *The Golden Peninsula:*

> Although Theravāda doctrines were probably transmitted orally in Pali from the time of Aśoka, they were not written down until the first century B.C. In the fifth century A.D., the Theravāda Buddhist tradition was interpreted by the famous monk Buddhaghosa, and his interpretations have remained the orthodox interpretations for Theravāda Buddhists to this day....... Orthodox Theravāda Buddhism, the Buddhism that used Pali texts and followed the interpretations of Buddhaghosa, did not flourish in either Ceylon or Southeast Asia until many centuries after Buddhaghosa death. Although Buddhism was an important element in the syncretic traditions of classic civilizations in Southeast Asia, such Buddhism was most usually that of a school other than Theravādins. Moreover, it was often found as one among Indianized traditions as can be clearly seen, for example, in the case of Angkor. Indeed at times, Theravāda Buddhism all but disappeared; however, a few centers in southern India, Ceylon, lower Burma and perhaps central Thailand continued to preserved the tradition despite the vicissitudes to which it was subjected.[8]

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[8]Keyes, (1977), p. 79.

In this citation we have all the typical misunderstanding in all aspects beginning with the relation between Pāli Buddhism with that of Aśokan time, the status of Theravāda Buddhism in ancient Southeast Asia, and the overemphasizing of the doctrinal aspects of Theravāda Buddhism.

N. Ray's studies are the only works that come close to what we call history of religion. They are *Brahmanical Gods in Burma* (1932), *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma* (1936) and *An Introduction to the Study of Theravāda Buddhism in Burma* (1946). However, he confines his study only to Burma. For the word "Burma" he takes it as a geographical term, Burma at the time he was writing the book. But this, as we have stated above, was not adequate since "Burma" as such did not exist prior to the eleventh century. He does not seem, as we may expect, to see any relations between Brahmanism, Sanskrit Buddhism and Theravāda Buddhism. Some of his conclusion are now out of date, especially on the matter of how and when Buddhism was introduced into Burma. There is another book of which title does not figure Buddhism but data on Buddhism in Ancient Cambodia are richly provided. This is a monograph written by K. Bhattarcharya, *Les Religions Brahmaniques dans l'Ancien Cambodge*. Since these scholarships do not take into account Buddhism in other regions of Southeast Asia, they do not reflect the broad perspective of the phenomenology of the history of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

For religious concept, its changes and developments and cultural relations between India and Southeast Asia Paul Mus's *Barabudur*, and his article "Cultes indiens et indigènes au Champa" are essential to our studies. Mus's gives us numerous insights on religious concepts of India and Southeast Asia, even though Mus does not really have any data to substantiate some of his ideas.

Apart from these works we have a great number of articles and books on history of Southeast Asia itself, but the authors seem to try to avoid religious issues. Most of the studies in religions are in the disciplines of Sociology and Anthropology,

and thus describe only the present state of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. These works represent the Western approach to studying religion in Southeast Asia. Since the religious practices are found to be different and consisting of many aspects other than Buddhism as prescribed in the Buddhist scripture, sociologists and anthropologists must explain how these practices and beliefs can exist together. They explain the coexistance as either an example of syncretism or of multi-layer functions. However, if we take the structure of religious phenomena in ancient Southeast Asia into account, these two concepts do not seem to be the best answer to the problem. We propose that the answer must be sought from the perspective of the peoples of Southeast Asia themselves. We do not deny that the Western approach has contributed much understanding to the situation, but we venture to look at it from the point of view of a native, born and educated in the very environment so that we can supplement to what the former researchers have achieved.

Lately there has been an effort to integrate historical perspective to these types of studies. But since the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia is seen as a movement which did not start until the eleventh century, its history which scholars use to explain the present situation does not go beyond that point of time. This type of study can be represented by the admirable work of Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer*, which is supposed to use Buddhist historical data from Southeast Asia. In this work subtitled "A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand against a Historical Background," the historical data used are from the Agaññasutta, and the history of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, rather than from Thailand. We would expect him to use data found in cultures such as Dvāravatī, but Tambiah does not use even data from Buddhism in Ayuthya period, the period right before the Bangkok era.

For bibliographical reference of these works, Reynolds's articles: the first comprises only Theravāda Buddhism in India and Sri Lanka, "From Philology to anthropology: A Bibliographical Essay on Works Related to Early Theravāda and

Sinhalese Buddhism"; the second, "Tradition and Change in Theravāda Buddhism: A Bibliographical Essay Focused on the Modern Period. Bechert's *Buddhismus, Staat und Gesellschaft in den Landern der Theravāda Buddhismus* volume III, also provides valuable and comprehensive information on works on Theravāda Buddhism.

We therefore have numerous works concerning the introduction of Buddhism. They deal with issues concerning its introduction only. Usually they start with the mission sent in the reign of Aśoka, and cross over centuries to Buddhism in Aniruddha and Ramkhamhaeng's time. On the other hand we have a wealthy asset of works on modern Theravāda Buddhism. What we miss here is the story of Buddhism in between its introduction until the eleventh century.

We thus propose to study history of Buddhism in the "ancient" or "protohistorical" Southeast Asia. The word "history" here has to be taken in the sense of development and pattern of Buddhism in this ancient time, and not every event happened in this span of thousand years. And we shall not deal with the practices of Buddhism in detail. And since data in Burma and Cambodia have been present in the works of N. Ray and Bhattacharya, we shall provide, in most cases, data found in Thailand. We shall demonstrate that the religious situation in this period has profound impacts on the subsequent period. Its structure and development are crucial for the understanding of the development of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. And due to the lack of this knowledge, scholars have introduced a wrong picture concerning the ascendency of Theravāda Buddhism and wrong concepts of its practice in the so-called "Theravāda Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia."

We shall begin by providing historical and cultural background for the study. Since the cultural history of Southeast Asia has been affecting by Indian cultures, it is natural to commence our research with an investigation on the concept of the "Indianization." This introduction of Indian cultures then will be narrowed to the

introduction of Buddhism in the next chapter. In chapter 4 we shall present our data pertaining to Buddhism, and try to reconstruct the structure of Buddhism before the eleventh century. Our main sources will be inscriptions and archaeological finds. This then will be supplemented by a study on the perception of Southeast Asia peoples toward religion. We shall try to investigate how indigenous beliefs and Indian beliefs interrelate. This will help us to understand religious situation in which Theravāda Buddhism forms a crucial part. The next chapter will be devoted to the characteristics, the history and the issue surrounding its ascendency.

Transliteration and Spelling

The transliteration of Pāli and Sanskrit will be according to the Pāli Text Society, and Monier-Williams's dictionary. For Thai words, the method provided by the Royal Institute will be adopted, but without the diacritical mark. Cambodian words will be transliterated by the French system of École Française d'Extrême-Orient. For Chinese, the Pinyin system will be adopted throughout. For those which are in the quotation, the terms will remain as spelt in the original source.

The word "Brahmanism" will be preferred to "Hinduism" in most cases, since it is known to the people of Southeast Asia by the name "Sāsana Brāhma." The American form "Southeast Asia" will be used throughout, except in quotations where other forms such as "South East Asia" and "South-East Asia" are used.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

The study of Southeast Asian history and culture has its origin in the colonial era when the British ruled Burma and Malaysia, the French ruled Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, and the Dutch Indonesia.[1] Consequently, only these areas were given a considerable amount of attention, even though Burma was studied as part of India.[2] The exploration, excavation and field studies carried on by British, French, and Dutch scholars thus remained only in those countries; only a little attention was given to studying the data found in Thailand.[3]

After the Second World War, the whole area from Burma in the west to the Philippines in the east and from the south of China, or to be exact south of the Yang Tze

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[1]Researches on Burma, French Indochina and Dutch East Indies were in most part funded by the colonial governments.

For Burma, see *ARASB* for short reports on excavations and comments; most of detailed discussion and studies appear in *ARASI*, and also *JBRS*.

For French Indochina, see *JA*; *BEFEO* and its publications; and monographs such as Lévi's Indochine; Lagonquière's Inventaire Descriptif des Monuments du Cambodge, etc. For detailed bibliography on archaeology of the area see Jean Boisselier's *Asie du Sud-Est*, Tome I, Le Cambodge. Paris: Édition A. et J. Picard et Cie. 1966.

For Dutch East Indies see *Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandsche Akadamie van Wetenschappen*; *Notulen van het Koninklijk Bataviaasch van Kunsten en Wetenschappen; Bijdragen tot de Taal-, land-, en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indie*, etc.

Summary of these sources from colonial scholars can be found in Chapter 1 of H. B. Sarcar's *Cultural Relations between India and Southeast Asian Countries*. New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Motilal Banarsidass, 1985.

[2]See Niharjan K. Ray's comment in his book: *An Introduction to the Study of Theravāda Buddhism in Burma*. Calcutta, 1946; and his *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*. Calcutta, 1936, p. 1.

[3]This may be because of at that time not so many excavations were done in Thailand. Whatever the case may be, when Coedès edited Pāli Chronicles written in the north of Thailand, the Cāmdevīvamsa and Jinakālamālinī, he called them 'Documents sur l'Histoire Politique et Religieuse du Laos Occidental.' Actually, Cāmadevīvamsa is probably a chronicle of Mon and Jinakālamālinī, Northern Thai. Nevertheless, researches on ancient cultures in Thailand have been carrying mostly by French scholars such as Coedès, Lagonquière, and even nowadays by J. Boisselier and C. Jacques. Recently in 1988, a symposium called *Premier Symposium Franco-Thāi "La Thāilande des Débuts de son Histoire au XV ème Siècle"* (*PSFT*) was organized at Silapakorn University in Thailand.

river[4] down to the East Indies, comes to be known as Southeast Asia or South East Asia. With the area so vast and the culture so varied, the general study of the area seems to be impossible. However the case may be, attempts have been made and various approaches have been applied, always with the influence of the studies in the colonial era: that is to say, the data and attention are still given to the area colonized.[5] This may be because later scholars have something to work on as continuation from the pioneer scholars.[6]

In the last two decades the situation has somewhat approved. Scholars in this field have tried to look at Southeast Asian Studies from a different perspective, divorcing themselves from pre-conceived ideas.[7] Recent excavations, particularly in Thailand, have yielded a lot of new data of which the effect has already been felt in the changing history of Southeast Asia.[8]

In view of these recent developments, both in the discoveries of new data and new interpretations, to give a detailed account of History of Southeast Asia, such as a genealogy of kings, the exact dates of events such as wars, would be inadequate and does not serve our purpose. Instead, we propose to give a general review of historical works done before and try to evaluate and detect misconceptions involved in those works. This will be followed by more recent scholarship, and hence the changing

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[4]See Chapter 1 about the name 'Southeast Asia.'

[5]For the problem of diversity see for examples: Introduction of *ESEA*; chapter 2-3 of O. W. Wolters, (1982); chapter 1 of Lea William, (1976); Chapter 1 of Donald McCloud, (1986).

[6]Even in recent scholarship, articles on Cambodia and Indonesia are far more numerous than those on Thailand; see D. G. E. Hall, (ed.), (1961).

[7]See Harry J. Benda, (1972), pp. 121-153. And *ESEA*, especially D.T. Bayard's article 'The Chronology of Prehistoric Metallurgy in North-east Thailand: Silābhūmi or Samṛddhibhūmi?' Also D.T. Bayard, (1980-81): 'The Root of Indochinese Civilization: Recent Developments in the Prehistory of Southeast Asia,' in *Pac. Aff.*, pp. 89-114, with excellent bibliography for the topic; and Magdelene Von Dewall, (1980) 'Cultural Legacies in Southeast Asia- Some observations on the scope of Archaeology and Art in Pre-literate Society,' in *Mal. Hist.*, pp. 117-129.

[8]*ESEA*, but this is by no means conclusive. Evidence on ancient history of Southeast Asia is still very meager as Karl L. Hutter, the reviewer of the book, comments; see *JOAS*, XLI, No. 3, May 1982, pp. 559-570. However, further data enable Higham to reconstruct a very convincing picture, see Higham, (1989).

image of Southeast Asian scholarship. This wealthy asset of data will yield us the picture of Southeast Asia in prehistoric and protohistoric[9] periods in which the indigenous culture and the 'Indianization' play an important role. And finally major important civilizations and their centers will be given in order to set the historical and cultural framework for this research.

Misconceptions in the study of History and Culture of Southeast Asia.

Books on Southeast Asia, either historical or cultural, usually begin with the most common issue, the Indianization of the region. The process depicted is the dynamism of Indian civilization, and the passivity of the Southeast Asian counterpart. Bayard repeatedly quotes the following passages to show this attitude, which is worth repeating with some modification on the sequence to suit our purpose.[10]

> In South-eastern Asia, the environment is extremely humid, presenting the difficulties of rain forests and also requiring large drainage projects. And in both areas (south-east Asia and Yucatan), the civilizations appear to have been later than, and in part derived from, those of the irrigation areas[11]

> One of the main reasons why the mainland of south-east Asia merits study is that it forms a kind of funnel through which people have spread over Indonesia, Melanesia, and farther afield. Another is its intermediate position between the two main foci of culture in India and China respectively. Claims that it was in itself the cradle of an early civilization based on the cultivation of rice are not substantiated by the archaeological evidences[12]

> It is interesting to note that even in prehistoric times the autochthonous people of Indochina seem to have been lacking in creative genius and

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[9]Protohistory is the archaeological history of man in the period immediately preceding recorded history.

[10]Bayard (1979) in *ESEA*, pp. 15-16; and Bayard (1980) in *Pac. Aff.*, p. 89.

[11]Steward (1955), p. 199.

[12]Clark (1965), p. 201.

showed little aptitude of making progress without stimulus from outside.[13]

These books written in 1955, 1965, 1966, respectively, clearly show that before 1967 the picture of ancient Southeast Asia was insignificant in context of World civilization. The area was isolated, backward, and primitive. Civilization or even culture had to come from outside and thus had to be studied in the light of foreign influences. Assuming that this attitude were correct, it would mean that prehistoric Southeast Asia had no culture of its own, any development had to be derived from either India or China. And for mainland Southeast Asia it was just a passage through which people of different ethnic groups passed.[14]

From these kinds of preconceived ideas, Southeast Asian Studies were limited to the study of Indianization: the process of cultural domination in which all the activities were initiated by the Indians; almost all of the prehistoric culture of the area was neglected.[15] As for protohistoric and historical records of places and events, apart from epigraphical data, Chinese documents were extensively used more or less at their face value.[16] And since the mainland part was just a funnel for migration of

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[13]Coedès (1968), p. 13.

[14]See H.B. Sarkar (1985) chapter 3, especially notes on page 105 ff. Sarkar does not discuss problems of the issue but mainly follows pioneer scholars ideas. See also Coedès, (1968). For objection to the studies of this trend, see Bayard (1980).

[15]Coedès, (1953, 1966, 1968), touches upon the matter. But he says in (1953) "Mais on possède une précieuse source d'information dans l'étude des sociétés attardées d'Indochine et d'Indonésie, dont certaines commencements à peine à sortir de l'âge néolithique. Ayant, dans un lointain passé, résolu au mieux les problèmes que leur posaient leur habitat et les possibilités de satisfaire leurs besoins élémentaires, elles n'avaient aucun motif de changer d'état social et genre de vie, en l'absence de modification du milieu ou d'innovation technique." H.B. Sarkar (1985) treats the subject in more detail but he fells to draw the connection and the impact of the cultures to the historical ones, see chapters 2 and 3 of his book.

[16]Jacques, (1979), in *ESEA*, pp. 371 ff. On page 375 he says "It is not at all my intention to deny the great contribution of the Chinese annals to Khmer history . First of all, for the whole period which preceded the oldest inscriptions, they are our one and only source, and later on, they give some of the essential landmarks. Nevertheless, they do not seem to have been studied with a sufficiently critical mind, especially since the Khmer inscriptions at disposal of research workers are comparatively numerous. However criticizable these sources of information might sometimes be, we are compelled to believe their genuineness and their considerable asset of being indigenous. On the whole, what did Funan represent for the Emperor of China? A remote country, which sent to him, from time to time, an ambassador and some tribute, by which he happened to be embarrassed; so it was, most probably, with Zhenla. Some attendants summarized for the benefit of the Emperor, in a necessarily very schematic

different ethnic groups, there were numerous studies to determine what ethnic groups had passed this area, when the migration happened. This direction of studying Southeast Asian history and culture has dominated and still used by some scholars.[17]

In the study of ancient history and culture of the area we have yet another set of problems. The most common one has been mentioned above, namely that the attention and the data used are of the colonized areas; thus the conclusions in most case are not so accurate for the region as a whole. For example, Sircar in his Indian Epigraphy mentioned the oldest Mon inscription found in the central part of Thailand, yet the conclusion is that the center of these people was in the lower part of Burma,[18] the area in which both epigraphical and archaeological finds were of at least six centuries later.[19]

The second is that most of these researches were done using the present political boundaries which did not exist in ancient times. For example Ray's Introduction to Theravāda Buddhism in Burma, the first part of which should be studied with other Buddhist centers in Southeast Asia at the same time.[20]

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report, what they knew, directly or otherwise, about these countries. Of course, the larger the countries appeared, the greater honour received by the Emperor, when an ambassador of these remote countries happened to render homage to him; and temptation might be strong to magnify the importance of these "vassals", who themselves could see in that only an advantage. So perhaps the Chinese came to think that Funan was a large empire, and accordingly Zhenla, which supplanted it..."

See also Wolters, (1982), p. 13: "I suggest that a gap persists between prehistory and protohistory represented by "Funan" because different terminologies are used when discussing each period. An outline of "incipient state formation" depends on such Western terms as "fairly extensive trade relations", wet rice, iron technology, and "probably increasing population density and political centralization in some alluvial plains of the mainland". These terms taken by themselves, signify economic developments that would be accompanied by the appearance of more complex political systems. Nevertheless, prehistorians have to deny prehistory the achievement of "statehood" by indigenous processes because of what they believe is known of the fully-fledged "state of Funan". The elaboration of the features of a "Funanese" typology, however, depends on an altogether different set of signifiers that owe their origin to Chinese document and are therefore influenced by Chinese preconceptions of a "state". The Chinese supposed for example, that any state should be associated with rules of dynastic succession and be described by fix boundaries...."

[17]For examples, H.B. Sarkar, (1985); Hazra, (1982); Sirisena, (1978) etc.

[18]Sircar, (1965), p. 211.

[19]Diffloth, (1981), p. 120.

[20]N. Ray, (1946).

The third is that most of the time the sources were used anachronistically, especially in determining a place or an event by using sources written a thousand years later without support from either epigraphical or archaeological evidences. For example the data used for locating Suvarṇabhūmi in most cases were drawn from Sāsanavamsa, a work written in the nineteenth century and the Kalyānī inscription of the fifteenth century.[21]

The fourth lies in the use of Chinese documents without realizing that the situations were described from the Chinese perspectives and worldview. As a result we possess a rather distorted picture of political and cultural systems of the area, because for the Chinese an empire is an empire with definite territory ruled by a strict patrilineal dynasty, a phenomenon rather rare in this area.[22]

These concepts produce an image of Southeast Asia as a 'cultural vacuum' before the advent of Indianization. There are however some studies that do mention indigenous culture but never show any connection or reaction which must have happened along the process of Indianization.[23] And consequently the dynamics such as the power of assimilation and adaptation of the Indian side and the power of absorption and selection on the Southeast Asian side have never received their rightful attention.

The presentation of ancient history and culture of the area by modern political boundaries robs us of the relations between these ancient cultural centers and thereby presents cultural activities in this whole area as something without continuity and mutual influences.

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[21]Ibid., p. 3.

[22]See supra. footnote 16, and Wolters, (1982), pp. 12-14.

[23]Sarkar, (1985), chapter 2 and 3.

Recent studies on Southeast Asia

From 1970 onward, studies especially in the field of Epigraphy and Archaeology have yielded new data for ancient studies of Southeast Asia. However, no comprehensive history or study of culture is done except for articles and reports on new ideas and interpretations.[24] Most books on the history of Southeast Asia present the ancient period as a prolegomenon to serve as a background for the study of modern history. And yet more attention is paid to the treatment of dynamic forces involved in the historical and cultural process.[25]

Emmerson, in his article 'Issue in Southeast Asian History: Room for interpretation - A Review Article'[26], although mainly concerned with modern history, provides a very good description of the academic situation relevant and pertinent also to the studies of the ancient Southeast Asian history and culture. His thesis, rather compact and complicated at the same time, deserves to be quoted in full as follows:

> Imagine a three-dimensional space, a cube. Along the first dimension, from *unity* to *diversity*, books on Southeast Asian history could be compared- whether the region is pictured as an integral whole made up of similar units, as a congeries of disparate items, or as something in between. The heterogeneity of Southeast Asia has become a cliche. No comparable part of the world requires knowledge of more languages, religions, and ecologies, or offers more exceptions to generalization about itself. Yet without some unity, the rationale for studying of Southeast Asia as a historically distinct region disappears. The same books could be compared on a second dimension, from *continuity* to *change-* whether and how much they emphasize persistence or innovation. For example: Was Southeast Asian history merely interrupted, or was it fundamentally redirected by colonial intervention? How much of a "break with the past" did the Japanese occupation constitute? Such questions have preoccupied historians. Finally, the books could be compared on a third dimension, from *originality* to *dependence-* whether and to what extent indigenous events are understood in their own terms or through forces and concepts

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[24]For examples, *ESEA, RCESEA, PSFT,* the most comprehensive one so far is Higham, (1989).

[25]William, (1976); Osborne, (1979); Emmerson, (1980); Tinker, (1980).

[26]Emmerson, (Nov 1980), pp. 43-68.

> originating outside Southeast Asia. This issue too has ranked high on the agendas of historians. ...
>
> The six sides, eight corners, and the twelve edges of a cube are hard to keep in mind, not to mention the infinite number of locations that could be pinpointed inside it. I will used only six of the eight corners of the cube, its center, and its four vertical edges. for convenience, these latter have been named. The left front vertical edge in the figure, where the originality and continuity of Southeast Asia are emphasized, is called *historicism*. Diagonally opposite, stressing dependence and change, is *modernism*. The remaining two edges form a second pair of opposites, namely *microdynamism* (originality and change) and *macrosystemism* (dependence and continuity).[27]

Emmerson clarifies these terms and reviews books on Southeast Asian history which can be classified roughly under the headings unity-diversity, original continuity and dependent change, historicism and modernism, microdynamism and finally macrosystemism. Most of the books reviewed concern pre-colonial and colonial period; the problems are about whether there is any unifying themes for Southeast Asian history, whether the region retains its originality after being colonized, whether there is any transformation by the colonization etc. We shall depict his ideas and critics first and then proceed to apply these methods to our study.

Books which emphasize unity and diversity try to show that the history can be dealt with in unifying themes such as shame and reciprocity, religious differentiation and syncretism, supranaturally sanctioned rulership, and the village as sociospiritual community.[28] To this Emmerson objects "Generalizing these terms cross-culturally can hardly be straightforward when their value as keys even to the cultures that originated them has been disputed....The broader the category used to summarize various phenomena, the less its capacity to distinguish Southeast Asia from other world regions." On the other side of the scale there are those who overemphasize

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[27]Ibid. pp. 43-44.

[28]Ibid., p. 50.

distinctiveness in order to find an identity for the region in the uniqueness of its variety: unity in diversity.[29]

Those which belong to the class 'original continuity' which mainly compound the concept of originality and continuity together. They maintain that indigenous culture remains more or less continuing, and attribute short-run changes to outside intervention. Consequently, regional cultures and history unfold itself by the continuity of their own indigenous traditions; this concept creates a gap between originality and transformation caused by outside influences. On the other hand there are those who advocate the idea that changes have to come from outside, "the dependent change", thus the foreign influences are the main factor in determining the course of Southeast Asian history. These two aspects are called by the terms of Historicism: the assertion that cultures are unique, enduring periods of time best studied from within, and Modernism: the idea that Southeast Asian history consists primarily of changes caused by, dependent upon, and best appreciated in terms of, outside forces.

The last pair, Microdynamicism: the correlation of originality and change and Macrosystemism: the correlation of dependence and continuity, are actually modifications of Historicism and Modernism except that for microdynamicism changes come from within, that is the original change, and macrosystemism the continuity is not that of the originality but of the outside forces, that is to look at Southeast Asian history in the context of global phenomena.

Books which use the microdynamic method emphasize the importance of Southeast Asia as the main factor in the transformation and at the same time accept the fact of outside forces being present. They picture Southeast Asians as individuals and in groups, transforming themselves and their environs in original ways.

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[29]Ibid., p. 51.

In a somewhat contrastive way, books in the trend of the macrosystemism perceive phenomena in Southeast Asian history as a "mere" variation on some world-historical theme. In a sense Southeast Asia cannot be understood in isolation from the outside world.[30]

All of the methods above mentioned, even though intended only for history can be applied also to the cultural studies. As we would expect, most books on Southeast Asian history and culture would fall into the categories either historicism or modernism. For early Southeast Asian history and cultures, modernism impregnated with the theory of diffusion has been in its supremacy, that is to say any changes or transformation would have to come from outside. Recently a movement of historicism has prevailed among native scholars, a movement which may be easily styled as nationalism.[31] These groups of scholars try to prove the originality of Southeast Asian history and culture, however not Southeast Asian as a unity but as separated nations.

In reality each of these methods has its own merits and demerits, if it is used with the awareness of its limit and the realization of the other alternatives. For our research the concept of unity and diversity still have to be taken into account since we will be dealing with a cultural theme, Buddhism, which has its effect on the whole area and yet in history has shown variety in different times and different regions. Neither can we deny, due to evidences namely discovered, the originality and the continuity of the indigenous cultures which underline the process of Indianization, though it would be wrong to perceive them as something independent from the process. On the other hand changes and transformations in a large scale happened as facts in history and cultures of Southeast Asia due to this Indianization which of course became evident

[30]Emmerson gives Steinberg, (1971) as the example for microdynamism, for macrosystemism see Emmerson, (1980), p. 61.

[31]For examples, Manit Vallibhotama (1978, in Thai), Wongdesa (1983, in Thai)

and effective through the acceptance of religions from India. Yet we cannot admit that this process should be credited to Indian civilization alone since this region has never become 'Indian' but just 'Indianized' itself. We can also view the situation of early Southeast Asia around that time as a region which was effected by the growth of trade and economy and by the general phenomenon of the spread of religion, in this case Buddhism, outside of India, presumably occurring at about the same time of its spread to Central Asia and eventually to China.

Equipped with all these tools we shall proceed to reconsider the process of Indianization starting with the investigation of indigenous cultures and then the process itself.

Indianization Reconsidered

The term 'Indianization' itself poses numerous problems. It can be classified as belonging to terms such as Aryanization[32], Sanskritization[33], Brahmanization[34] and Hinduization[35] which have their origin as a very general term coined to cope with or sum up the domination or even superimposition of a culture, a greater one in a sense, to another lesser one. The term 'Indianization' was actually an English translation of the French one used by Coedès in his locus classicus in the study of Southeast Asia, 'Les états hinduisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie.'[36] The equivalent should be 'Hinduization' rather than 'Indianization' as Briggs, the reviewer of the book translated as 'The Hinduized States of Southeast Asia.' However, with no apparent reason when the translation was made the title appears to be 'The

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[32]See Mus, (1933), p. 7 ff.; and Thapar, (1978), pp. 135, 221.

[33]See definition and discussion on the term in Srinivas, (1948), and Staal's comment (1963).

[34]Ibid.

[35]See Briggs, (1948).

[36]Coedès, (1968).

Indianized States of Southeast Asia,' from which the word 'Indianization' has been derived. Later on Coedès himself seems to prefer 'Indianized' to 'Hinduization' as the word is found used in his later works.[37]

The term itself is rather misleading due to its connotation which suggests somehow that Southeast Asia was so overwhelmed with Indian civilization that its nations can be called 'Hindu Colonies'. The word 'Colonization' together with Further India and Greater India were used by Indian scholars and to some extent also by some Western scholars.[38]

By just looking at the term a great number of questions occur in our mind: Does it suggest that the region affected become Indian or Hindu? When and in what part of the region did it happen? From which parts of India did it come? Which parts of Southeast Asia and which groups of people did it affect? How did it become affected? What factors involved in the process? What was the result of the process? etc.

It is generally accepted now that Southeast Asia never becomes a second India or should not be studied and considered as a part of India as Indian and some Western scholar in the 1940s would have it.[39] Coedès himself repeatedly calls Southeast Asian states which were affected by Indian culture as 'External India.'[40] In doing so he seems to contradict himself by calling his book 'The Indianized States of Southeast Asia' in which the word 'indianized' should have the meaning of something being affected by Indian civilization, and not something being turned into India.

As Coedès is the coiner of the term, his definition should be analyzed first. He defines the term 'Hinduization' as follows:

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[37]Coedès, (1953).

[38]See H. B. Sarkar, (1985), pp. 77 ff.; *JGIS*; K. K. Sarkar, (1968) pp. 2 ff.; Coedès, (1968).

[39]See Emmerson, (1980), p. 54.

[40]Coedès, (1968).

> Indianization must be understood essentially as the expansion of an organized culture that was founded upon the Indian conception of royalty, was characterized by the Hinduist or Buddhic cults, the mythology of the *Purāṇas*, the observance of the *Dharmaśāstras* and expressed itself in the Sanskrit language. It is for this reason that we sometimes speak of "Sanskritization" instead of "Indianization."[41]

In his definition we can see that he uses the word to include Buddhism though the implication is not very clear. The first point is that of the organized culture limited by the Hindu conception of royalty. It is thus something to do with rulers and courts, not the common people. This can be proved by epigraphical data, even in the area where most of them are Sanskrit inscriptions, the eulogy of Gods and king would be in Sanskrit but the command and the list of offering and temple slaves would be in local vernacular.[42] Therefore, it is worth speculating how much of Indian culture penetrated to the lower stratum of the society.

As for the influences of Indian epics and purāṇas which can be found in both epigraphical and archaeological data, we have to assume that only the elites would be

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[41]Coedès, (1968), pp. 15-16.

[42]K. K. Sarkar, (1968), pp. 27 ff. He comments on the point that there was a similar example in South India where the portion in verse is often written in Sanskrit and the portion containing technical details, in the vernacular languages. However, Sarkar thinks that "These inscriptions in Old Khmer, however, do not carry points of literary interest. .... The absence of literary productions in the ancient period of Cambodian history and the poor state of the Khmer language contrasted with the excellence of Sanskrit in the inscriptions make us believe that to a certain extent the literary genius of Khmer people was not much inspired by the Indian influence." Nevertheless these Khmer texts, even if in Sarkar's consideration are poor in literary value, yield some information on the common people at the time. See Higham, (1989), p. 258: "Nor should the archaic Khmer texts be overlooked for the information of the less exalted. They provide insight into social status of those who served in the temple, to their duties, and to the aspects of the landscape, such as boundaries of rice-fields, water tanks, paths and orchards (Jacob 1978, 1979). The clearest point to emerge from her study is the contrast between the dignitaries who found temples and those who provided for the temple's maintenance. The latter are often referred as "slaves" categorized by age, sex, and duties, among which we find herdsmen, rice-field workers, weavers, cooks and guards. We should not be led by a literal sense of the word slave into believing that coercion and loss of freedom were involved. Jacques, (1984), has persuasively argued that the real meaning is servants, or slaves, of the gods. This gloss give us a quite different impression, for service in the ancestral temple, a situation widespread throughout much of lowland Southeast Asia today, is quite consistent with willing work in family land holdings."

able to understand them. For common people we have the folk versions which have been transformed and modified to fit their own ideology.[43]

This holds true to the adoption of Dharmaśāstras. All the versions extent are heavily influenced by local and Theravāda Buddhist concepts rather than the Hindu Dharmaśāstras.[44] There are of course some references to the Hindu Dharmaśāstras in their own original form, but how the rules were applied is not clear.[45] The concept of caste system[46] and the attitudes toward woman would be great obstacles to be applied to Southeast Asian states, since they did not have the caste system as of Hindu and the status of women was very high in their society.[47]

The last point, Sanskrit being used as means of expression, is true only for royal inscriptions. For normal speech, except for some religious terms, though not without the change of meaning, the languages used were local vernaculars as attested to by names. Even nobility and administrative names mostly remained in local languages.[48] The process of Sanskritization of normal people's name did not occur until very recently when the royalty encouraged them to do so.[49]

It is worth noting that in his definition, religion or belief does not form the central idea in the process or impact of the Indianization. In fact it was through

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[43]Desai, (1970), Pou, (1979, 1982)

[44]For detail discussion see Lingat, (1950), Goody and Tambiah, (1973) especially part 5, pp. 138 ff.

[45]Higham, (1989), p. 260.

[46]Thapar makes a very pertinent point concerning the differences between Hindu legal concept and Buddhist legal concept in her article "Society and Law", see Thapar, (1978), pp. 28 ff.

[47]For detailed studies of matriarchal society of Southeast Asia see Lingat, (1955).

[48]Discussion on these administrative names can be seen in Higham, (1989), pp. 255 ff.

[49]The phenomenon seems to happen only in Thailand, in other countries people's names remain in vernacular tongue.

religion that the process was possible and thus it should be considered as being a major dynamism of the Indianization.[50]

From all these points we can see that the process and its impact cannot be simpiified to the fact that there was or there appeared Indian culture in Southeast Asia and thus it was indianized. That Indian cultures influenced Southeast Asia, not just the upper level of society but the lower too, cannot be denied, but to view Southeast Asia as merely a passive receptacle is not acceptable either.

Whatever the case maybe, we are in debt to all these epigraphists and scholars who have done pioneer research on this field. Their works allow us to continue our study with some guidance and direction. We may be in a better position in terms of data which allow us to expand our scope and ideas further than they did. Coedès himself realizes that indigenous cultures were also the main factor in the process as he mentions 'le substrat autochtone et la superstructure indien..etc.',[51] in his books and articles. But we shall find later on that it is not the case of substratum and superstructure, instead the case of the assimilation or rather the transformation of the superstructure to suit the original structure. In order to understand the process of Indianization properly we shall investigate this substratum before continuing to unravel the problems stated above.

Indigenous cultures

When we are talking about indigenous cultures of Southeast Asia we inevitably put ourselves in the period of prehistory. As a result all the data would have to come from the archaeological side and its interpretations. Most of the data thus remain in the domain of material cultures rather than abstract ones. However with the help of other disciplines such as Anthropology and History of Art, they are

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[50]Even books on cultural relations such as H. B. Sarkar, (1985), does not treat the subject in a separate chapter. Most of books written on religion are history of the relationship between India and Sri Lanka in terms of religion, see Sirisena, (1978); N. Ray, (1946); Hazra, (1982).

[51]Coedès, (1953).

interpreted and give us some knowledge of indigenous beliefs which we shall try to examine in the following chapter.

Coedès sums up indigenous cultures in his book 'Les états hinduisée..' as follows:

> ..with regard to the material culture, the cultivation of irrigated rice, domestication of cattle and buffalo, rudimentary use of metals, knowledge of navigation; with regard to the social system, the importance of role conferred on women and of relationships in the maternal line, and an organization resulting from the requirements of irrigated agriculture; with regard to religion, belief in animism, the worship of ancestors and the god of soil, the building of shrines in high places, burial the dead in jars or dolmens; with regard to mythology, "a cosmological dualism in which are opposed the mountain and the sea, the winged race and the aquatic race, the men of the heights and those of the coast"; with regard to linguistics, the use of isolating languages with a rich faculty for derivation by means of prefixes, suffixes and infixes.[52]

What Coedès says still in the most part hold true except that these are not primitive or backward. Recent archaeological finds reveal that Southeast Asia was well developed, if not the first in developing, in agriculture and metallurgy especially bronze and probably iron too prior to the coming of Indians and Chinese.[53] As Paul Mus has pointed out the Indians did not encounter masses of barbarians or primitive society but rather well-established form of culture and society with a special concept of leader which would assert its immense influence on history of Southeast Asia, both spiritual and material.[54] Mus has summed up the concept that "'The latter [the king] is the medium of the divinity. In him, by delegation, resides the power which assures the fertility of animals and plants, and in general the good fortune of the group."[55] Since this is a very important concept we shall take it up again later in chapter five.

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[52]Coedès, (1968), pp. 8-9.

[53]See articles and bibliography in *ESEA*, *RCESEA*, and Solheim II, (1972).

[54]For the study of the concept see *The Sacral Kingship*, (1959).

[55]Mus, (1975), p. 15.

To reconstruct the exact picture of prehistoric Southeast Asia seems to be far fetched. However, thanks to the new data scholars are able to draw a convincing picture of the area. All of our knowledge until now has been summarized by Charles Higham in his new book called "The Archaeology of Mainland Southeast Asia," of which the outline we shall follow.

Higham divides a span of time from 10,000 B.C. up to the Fall of Angkor into six periods accompanied by some comments on each period only five of which will be presented here since the last period concerns directly the Indianization which belongs to another part of our study.[56]

1. 10,000 B.C. : EARLY HUNTER-GATHERERS

Sea level began much lower than today, rose about 3 m. higher at present. Former coastal settlements now drowned under the sea. Main surviving sites in land rock shelters. Limited range of stone tools, wooden implements for hunting and gathering probably important. Small, mobile groups collected wild plants and shellfish. Evidence for hunting, fishing and trapping.

2. 5,000 - 1500 B.C.[57] : COASTAL SETTLEMENT

Sea level rose sharply from about 7000-4000 B.C.; probably drowned coastal settlements. At 4000 B.C., sea level stabilized at a higher level than today. Evidence for rich sedentary coastal settlement involving ranking, exchange and elaborate mortuary ritual at Khok Phanom Di. Pollen evidence for settlement by 4700 B.C. Marine resources important, rice consumed. Latter may have been harvest from natural stands in fresh water swampland.

3. 3000 B.C.: GENERAL PERIOD A

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[56] Higham, (1989), pp. xv-xvi. Names mentioned in this synopsis are places in Southeast Asia.

[57] 1500 here probably is a misprint.

Settlement expansion into tributary streams of the Khorat plateau, middle of the Mekong delta and Chao Phraya valley. Settlements small, and social organization weakly ranked. Stone implements and shell were exchanged between communities which probably cultivated rice in swamp margin.

4. 2000-5000 B.C. GENERAL PERIOD B

Bronze-working spread among autonomous lowland communities. Ores mined in hills, ingots trades and implements cast in lowlands. Increase in ranking within small communities. Some family groups had high rank signified bu jewelry and bronze implements. Subsistence wide -ranging and includes rice which was probably cultivated.

5. 500 B.C. GENERAL PERIOD C

Iron-working, centralization and formation of chiefdoms. Initial contact with Indian traders and Han Chinese armies and increased exchange, social ranking and agriculture. Specialist bronze-workers produced ceremonial drinking vessels, decorative body plaque, bowls and great decorative drums. Chiefly burials in boat coffins.

We can see that by the time the initial contact with Indian and Chinese civilizations happened this area had already attained some advanced stage of cultures such as rice growing, trade and exchange within the region and high knowledge of metallurgy.[58] All these cultures have been issues for debating in this decade whether this area was the origin of rice domestication and of metallurgy.[59] We are not in the

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[58]Metallurgy is discussed in part I of *ESEA* and Topic II of *RCESEA*.

[59]See Bayard, (1980).

position to discuss these issues here, it is sufficient to say that all these happened at this early stage when the influence from outside had not yet reached the region.

With paddy rice growing which certainly demands control over water, we can also assume that their knowledge of irrigation was high especially in the areas in which flood or draught was frequent. Drought was avoided by moving down to river valleys, some of which have to be controlled to prevent flooding.[60] The growing difference between highland cultures and the lowland ones became more and more evident in the late prehistoric period when the initial contact between this region and Indian civilization took place.[61]

The contrast seems to have happened also among lowland settlements. Since not every valley provides perfect ecology for paddy rice growing, in some areas water was more easily accessible than others, and some areas were more prone to be flooded than others. This fact seems to have affect on the development of the classical states in mainland Southeast Asia. The area that would be Khmer kingdom, forced to develop complicated system of irrigation, had developed to be a 'temple-building' culture and had higher social and political structures. On the other hand the areas such as Chao Phraya valley remained a loosely organized political structure, consisting of small city-states or cluster of cities which were usually surrounded by moats and walls without grand scale building like those of Khmer.[62]

Another contrast in development of Southeast Asia history is that of mainland and maritime. Since river valleys are scarce in the archipelago, paddy or water -shed rice growing was not easily developed, and consequently the coastal societies were not capable of sustaining major political growth. And yet this part of Southeast Asia

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[60]Ng, (1979) in *ESEA*, pp.262-272.

[61]See introduction to the first part of *ESEA*.

[62]Ibid., p. 14, and Groslier, (1979), see also Vickery, (1986), and Higham, (1989), pp. 255 ff.

has played the major role in trades both intraregional and extraregional. There are evidences that before the Indians and the Chinese had arrived there was the gradual evolution of trade and cultural relationships between different areas of the region itself. This is indicated by the bronze drums which found scattered in most parts of Southeast Asia.[63]

Therefore, we may conclude that around the second half of the first millennium B.C. Southeast Asia had already advanced in terms of material civilization, rice growing, metallurgy, pottery etc., and in terms of political, the concept of 'man of prowess', and possibility of having developed advanced political entity[64], in terms of society, an agrarian society which implies that there were also some belief or some sort of religious concept which normally would occur in that kind of society.[65] This last aspect will be dealt with in a latter chapter of this study.

All these aspects of local civilization offered a favorable circumstance for the Indian one to be implanted in the region. Lea William has rightly observed '...it is certain that outsiders who first came from India and China to Southeast Asia were met by settled agricultural peoples living within the established social order, not by scattered bands of forest dweller. Clearly, without the requisite material and institutional infrastructure, aspects of higher cultures could not have been so successfully transplanted to the region. Nor would so much that is neither Indian nor Chinese have endured had indigenous cultures not possessed vitality and been both receptive to enrichment and able to maintain distinctiveness.'[66]

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[63]*ESEA*, pp. 4-5, 78, 98, 137.

[64]Wolters, (1982), pp. 12 ff.

[65]Porée-Maspéro, (1969).

[66]William, (1976), p. 25.

Actually, there occurred the same situation in India itself in the period when Buddhism and a little later the modified form of Brahmanism, Hinduism emerged and spread. At that time central India had become rice growing: agrarian society, with the use of iron the agriculture could easily be expanded and intensified, small kingdoms developed.[67] We may safely speculate that this was the culminating point of Aryanization, a term rather misleading too, since it refers only to the Aryans and neglects local people. In fact, it was the Aryans whose concept toward religions, society and politic had been dramatically changed by being encountered and challenged by the indigenous cultures. The transformation in religious thoughts are probably the most conspicuous: Vedic religions changed in the course of time, old gods were dethroned, new concept of gods, new gods, new ways of worshipping appeared etc. But this does not mean that Aryan cultures have no part in the developing of Indian cultures either, instead they form one of the two threads that holds Indian civilization which will eventually expand to the land yonder.

The Process of Indianization

As we have already seen that the term Indianization has the defect of disregarding indigenous aspects of the process, however, we have to use the word for the sake of convenience, keeping in mind that this term refers to a reciprocal process, and that Indianization is not the only dynamic involving in the development of Southeast Asian civilization. Whatever the case may be, Indianization is a better term than Hinduization which is misleading because it does not seem to include Buddhism, a crucial factor in Indianization. It is better than Sanskritization which seems to limit the process only to a linguistical sphere, and better than Brahmanization which suggests that the process was dominated by the Brahmin

[67]de Jong, (1964), p. 432.

caste, and might entail the thought that Southeast Asian society had adopted the Hindu caste system as Coedès suggests.[68]

What then is this process of Indianization? In view of all the data we have, we might safely say that it is the process of acculturation or rather of cultural relations between India and Southeast Asia. As we observe facts in history we find out that at first the Indian cultures seemed to assert strong influences in almost every fields, but not before long the indigenous ones started to absorb, transform, blend both cultures into one that would show the local or regional characteristics. Therefore, different areas in the regions produced different schools of art, adopted religions and beliefs in different ways, and used Indian concepts to enhance or heighten their concepts in different ways.

The fact that art and architecture as well as local languages exist side by side with standard Indian languages inevitably lead us to the idea that there were multiple ethnic groups when the process of Indianization started. The logical conclusion seems to be that there were different ethnic groups present in Southeast Asia. The controversial point is whether or not one ethnic group or one race was connected to one state. Students of Southeast Asia come to know this region as Tibeto-Burman to the north, Mon-Khmer to the central and the southeast, Malay to the south including the islands. The Tai people slowly migrated down south. This migration was supposed to be intensified later on by the expansion of the Mongol empire. As a

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[68]Coedès, (1953), p. 373. He says "Contrairement à la occidentale, celle de l'Inde, dans laquelle la manière de vivre est conforme à une certaine doctrine philosophico-religieuse, forme un tout dans lequel le spitituell et le matériel sont indissociables: l'adoptation de l'hinduisme entrânait celle de l'état social indien, et l'adoption du genre de vie des Indiens entraânait la pratique de l'hinduisme......... On a la preuve épigraphigue qu'au Cambodge existaient des catégories d'individus portant le même nom (varṇa) que la caste indienne et correspondant a des activité déterminées." However, in his other book (1962) he admits that what he describes about Southeast Asia is only accurate in case of 'élites', and says that: "La structure générale de la société, la genre de vie et les croyances du peuple.... encore fort mal connu. Be that as it may he is still very persistent in the matter of caste, saying "Au Combodge par example, la division ancienne de la population en classes spécialisées hériditairement dans tel travail déterminé, et désignées par le mot 'varna' que les caste indiennes, l'encadrement de la population par une bureaucratie dont les fonctions sont désignées par les mots indiens, ont grandement facilité l'intergration de la société khmère dans la société indienne." It seems that this was only the case of adopting the terms not the concept.

result Dvāravatī was a Mon kingdom which would be superseded by Khmer empire, and Funan was overthrown by Zhenla which itself would later fall into same destiny in the hands of Angkorian Empire.

This means that what our pioneer scholars had in mind was these ethnic groups were separate nations or states, a political situation which will be proved to be rather deviant from the fact. And most of the time this type of designating an area to an ethnic group, made by scholars of the colonial era, had political implication of claiming the territories which were supposed to belong to the great ancient empire such as Khmer empire which in its height was claimed by scholars to have its influence over most of the central and northeastern parts of Thailand.[69]

It is true that we find inscriptions in Mon, Khmer, Pyu etc., in different parts, but this does not mean that all people in the areas in which the inscriptions were found should be of one and the same race. We also find Khmer inscriptions in central parts of Thailand, an area which is supposed to belong to the Mon speaking people. Would this suggest that around that time people in the area in question became Khmers?

Analysis on the skeletons excavated from prehistoric sites shows that people in these parts were of mixed types. There were also some experiments on blood types of which the result is that the Thai and Malay people have very close blood relationship.[70] So far as we can see, studies of these ethnic groups in this trend probably will not yield any satisfactory result in understanding either history or culture of Southeast Asia. There are also other facts which are against this concept. Instead of following studies in this trend we should concentrate on the relations among

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[69]S. Vallibhotama, (1982), p. 68 ff.

[70]M. Vallibhotama, (1978), p. 92. He also gives an account of the investigation basing on the stydy of skeletons of Mon and Thai people. The result is that they are so similar that one cannot make any substantial distinction between them, (p. 96).

different cultures whose continuity persists even nowadays, no matter what races or ethnic groups inherit them.

We have no sources to detect how the process of Indianization or its dynamics unfolded in history. Evidence available to us are epigraphical and archaeological data which reveal Indian influences. We have inscriptions in Indian languages not just in Sanskrit but also in Pāli and perhaps in other Prakrit languages. On the other hand we are not lacking inscriptions in local tongues. And most of the time both were used in the same inscription though not in the same manner.[71] We have objects of art such as statues of Hindu gods and Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, first with close resemblance to the Indian ones, then increasingly revealing local styles. From these data the effects of Indianization have been speculated by scholars. Unluckily, the efforts were mostly expended in pointing out what are Indian in them rather than looking at the dynamics, such as transformation and the effect on indigenous culture and vice versa. We shall deal with this aspect of the process later when we talk about the effects of Indianization.

The initial contact between these two regions has been proved to be in the late historic period, starting from around 300 B.C. onward.[72] Since then the relations have been constant and the process has been in progress and continuing, as we permit ourselves to venture, even to the present day. It would be useless to pinpoint the exact moment which can be called 'The Moment of Becoming Indianized' of Southeast Asia, since the process was not enforced by war or colonized with military forces but remained all through history as a peaceful one, a rather unique phenomenon in history of the world. Consequently there could be no abrupt moment in transmitting or accepting Indian cultures. Indian cultures have never been felt by Southeast Asian

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[71] See parallel situation in South Indian inscriptions in N. Sastri (1892, 3rd ed. 1966, 2nd impression 1971), p. 14, and see footnote 42 of this chapter.

[72] Higham, (1989), p. 242.

people as something alien. Of course, Indian cultures were highly regarded, and probably thought by commoners as something fit for royalty or nobility, but those royalties were of indigenous and not a foreign one.[73] The process then must be seen both diachronically, with cultural waves coming from India, and synchronically, with the process of selection done by kings or elite, and of transformation as natural process of acculturation of the masses. There seemed to be no conflict between the two cultures. This may be because the enthusiasm came from the local side or the Indians who came to Southeast Asia were only a few compared to the whole population of Southeast Asia, as it has been proved that there was no migration in grand scale from India as scholars of Greater India Society might be led to believe.[74] Another reason could be that the circumstances were favorable for Indian civilization to grow in this area as we have pointed out earlier.[75]

The areas affected by Indian civilization pose no geographical problem, we may say that almost all parts of Southeast Asia were affected except for the northern most which later on became sinicized, a process beyond the scope of this study. On the contrary, the question as to what part of India these cultures came from seems to pose problem, mainly because of localism among Indian scholars.[76] From our present knowledge we can say that they were mostly from South India and to some extent Central Asia, hence the areas in which strict Brahmanism was not prevalent, but the cradle of Buddhism and Hinduism.[77]

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[73]See D. G. E. Hall (3rd 1968, reprinted 1977) pp. 19 ff., for the discussion on the issue.

[74]The idea is now considered obsolete, see D. G. E. Hall, (1977), pp.19 ff., yet recent works such as H. B. Sarkar, (1985), still mention 'Indian migration, Early migrant community etc.' See H. B. Sarkar, (1985), chapters 3-5.

[75]See supra p.

[76]See H. B. Sarkar, pp. 68 ff.

[77]N. Sastri, (1971), p. 26. As of the present state of evidence we do not find references to Vedic rituals in Southeast Asia. For a detailed study of Brahmanism in Cambodia see K. Bhattacarya, (1961).

Trade has been designated as the main factor that brought about this acculturation. We have archaeological evidences that extra-regional trade took place between India and Southeast Asia long before the impact of Hinduism and Buddhism could be observed. However, the characteristic of the process such as inscriptions composed with highly ornate Sanskrit do not permit us to honor the merchants alone for the task of carrying the civilization.[78]

Now trade is not a stabilized activity, its components such as routes, goods and traders and traded people also can be varied in time. There are several routes both land and sea through which both areas can communicate. At first the relation seemed to concentrate on the mainland Southeast Asia, the area is accessible both by land route and sea route. The reason was that the sea route of the maritime Southeast Asia was unsafe due to piracy. Later on when Śrī Vijaya could control the maritime regions, trading shifted to maritime Southeast Asia. All these aspects also have affected the process of Indianization, since they allowed more time for the mainland areas to digest and thus localized Indian cultures in greater scale than the maritime area.

If the merchants could not be considered as the chief factor in this process, then could it be the Brahmins or the Kshatriyas? We have evidences both in inscriptions and Chinese sources relating the story of legendary origin of the royal family of classical states in Southeast Asia. But the legend seems to have been copied from the original one of a South India dynasty. Thus this probably was set up by the king of that time to claim that his lineage could be traced back to India.[79]

A question worth asking here is that how could the Indians, being bound by caste system, especially the Brahmins and being prohibited to go outside India,

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[78]See D. G. E. Hall, (1977), pp. 19 ff.

[79]See Coedès, (1968), p 276, note 11-16 , Coedès, (1940), and also Porée-Maspéro, (1950).

happen to come to trade with Southeast Asia? That there were Indian Brahmins and other Indians in this region could not be denied. Moreover there were also evidences that these people were marriage to local women. Either it was because of the rules prohibiting the travelling abroad did not exist at that time or the caste system was differently observed. And probably the urge for wealth became so important that the rules were not followed strictly.

In fact, Indian society around the time of the spread of Buddhism must have undergone some profound transformation. Conversion among upper classes were common.[80] And merchants were always the most generous supporters of this new religion. These high class people and also the merchants brought with them their belief and objects of reverence, a kind of religion that can be termed as 'portable religion' which in the future would be firmly implanted and made stabilized in Southeast Asia. It was through the acceptance of Indian religions that the process of Indianization materialized.

The last point is whether there were migrations on a grand scale from India. Some scholars have tried to connect waves of Indian cultures to massive migrations of either the princely caste or the merchant caste from India. The Kshatriya migrations were supposedly caused by political unrest such as Aśoka's invasion of Kalinga or Kaniṣka's invasion of Northern India. Some scholars go even further in establishing the link between the accession of new dynasties in Southeast Asian states to the fall of dynasties in India which were followed by the assumed emigration of their scions to Southeast Asia. However, the theory finds no support from any kind of evidences, and is now considered obsolete.[81]

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[80] de Jong, (1964), p. 426.

[81] See discussion in D. H. G. Hall, (1977), pp. 19 ff., and Bayard, (1980).

The presence of high- caste Indians such as Brahmin or Kshatriya in Southeast Asia was mostly connected with royalty. They were advisors, administrative personnel or royal priests, performing ritual for the prosperity of the king and his kingdom. This phenomenon did not happen as early as the time of the contact through trading. It occurred at the height of the process when the communications and traveling between the two centers were frequent, as we have records of pilgrimages to India of Southeast Asian people,[82] very probably the upper classes and not the lower ones. Therefore, it is very probable to say that it was due to the effort of Southeast Asian kings to bring in Brahmins from India to be their advisors. This practice persisted until nineteenth century, but this time the advisors were from the Western world.

We may safely conclude that at first the cultural contact might be the work of merchants, but this could not be considered as an intense process since people of that caste do not possess high knowledge of statecraft or philosophy. However, they were not illiterate and they were Hindu or Buddhist traveling around with their faith, they could be good examples of Indian high cultures. And it should not be forgotten that the merchants involved in this process were not the Indians only but also the merchants of Southeast Asia. Hall rightly observes "....the Malays were par excellence a sea-going people, and indications are not wanting that they resorted to the ports of India and Ceylon every bit as much as the shipment of India and Ceylon to the port of South-east Asia."[83] The other factors were the effort of the regional chieftains or kings who sought for the way to empower themselves by acquiring Brahmins to be their advisors, and the pilgrimages from the Southeast Asia to India. As for mission as a factor of Indianization, for the Hinduism side this was not evident, since they

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[82]Ibid., p. 21.

[83]D. G. E. Hall, (1977), pp. 13, 20-21.

were mainly court functionaries, but for Buddhism the possibility is very high. We shall deal with this problem in the next chapter.

Effects of Indianization

The impact of Indian cultures in a sense pervade all cultural and social aspects of Southeast Asia. Since the process was a long and varied in concentration according to place and time, the impact also was varied in different parts of Southeast Asia. Moreover, different social and cultural fields which were affected sometime cannot be treated separately; they are interrelated. Topics such as politics, religions, arts reflected and influenced each other. Since this section is aimed at drawing a historical framework for further research in the religious field, the topics which will be taken up will be those which are relevant to our purpose.

Art, architecture and literature will not be dealt with in detail here. Sufficient is to mention that they were not just 'Indian' but 'Indianized' which implies also the work of local people. Another important a achievement was a gift from India: an alphabet, the importance of which cannot be underestimated. With an alphabet, the historical era in Southeast Asia began. Organization such as government and the enforcement of law became more effective, and cultural relation was facilitated. These alphabets probably from South India are the mother of all the alphabets used in ancient Southeast Asia. Most of their derives are still in use nowadays.[84]

We therefore will concentrate only on political and social impacts. This will help us to get familiar with names of political units and their important centers which will be cited later in this study.

Coedès advocates that Indianization is the main factor in creating ancient or classical states of Southeast Asia, as he calls them 'Indian states.' His idea that

[84]See Dani, (1963), pp. 227-250.

> From this Indianization was born a series of kingdoms that in the beginning were true Indian states: Cambodia, Champa, and the small states of the Malay peninsular; the kingdom of Sumatra, Java, and Bali; and, finally the Burmese and the Thai kingdoms, which received Indian culture from the Mon and Khmers. Through reaction with the indigenous substratum, however, each of these states developed according to its own genius, although their cultures never lost the family resemblance that they owed to their common origin.[85]

Coedès statement still influences historians until recently. It is obvious from his idea that he connects these states according to their race and they superseded each other in time, and the familiarity among them was because their origin was Indian culture. Arranging according to his view, we have roughly six political areas:

1. the area where it is now Burma, the kingdom of Śrīkṣetra of the Pyu people, the south of which was the Mon kingdom of lower Burma which would supersede the former before it was overthrown by Pagan located in the north of Śrīkṣetra ;

2. Central Thailand, which was the kingdom of the Mon of Dvāravatī which later on would be invaded by the Khmer or the Angkor empire;

3. Cambodia and the Mekong delta, which were the kingdoms of Funan, Zhenla and Khmer successively;

4. coastal Vietnam and north of Cambodia, the kingdom of Cham which would weaken through wars with the Khmer empire and finally was taken over by the Vietnamese;

5. the south of Thailand, seats of small kingdoms mostly known from Chinese sources, and later dominated by the Empire of Śrī Vijaya which supposedly originated in Sumatra;

6. the East Indies which would be the area dominated by Śrī Vijaya and the Śailendra of Java.

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[85]Coedès, (1968), p. xxii.

The time span of these states ranges from the first century up to thirteenth century. In Coedès' view, the Mongol invasion which pushed the Thai people down and the invasion of the area by the Mongol itself caused the decline of these classical kingdoms: Pagan destroyed by Mongols, the advent of Thai kingdoms in the north of Thailand, the invasion of Khmer kingdom by the Thai kingdom of Ayuthya. All these brought the end to the decline of Indian kingdoms.[86]

Names of these kingdoms are mostly reconstructed from Chinese, only Dvāravatī and perhaps Śrī Vijaya have epigraphical supports.[87] And only three appear to be in Sanskrit: Śrīkṣetra, Dvāravatī and Śrī Vijaya. "Śailendra" is obviously a dynastic name not that of the kingdom. The rest such as Funan, Zhenla, Pan pan, Dun sun etc., seem to be Chinese interpretation of local names.[88] These names are probably not names of kingdoms, but of the city. In inscriptions people of Southeast Asia used their capital name to identify themselves, this practice persisted until the nineteenth century.[89]

To create this picture of classical kingdoms of Southeast Asia, Coedès mainly uses epigraphical and archaeological data, and interprets them with the help of Chinese sources. Consequently, his concept of these states is colored by the Chinese concept of territorial states. When we look closely at these data, these kingdoms did not really have definite boundary, and were never really centralized, certainly not according to the Chinese concept of great empire.[90]

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[86]Ibid., pp. 218 ff.

[87]Ibid., p. 76, 82; *IT*, I: 95-97, 126-128. Some scholars suggest that the name Śri Vijaya in the inscription is not the name of a state but of the king.

[88]For discussion of these names and their locations see Pelliot, (1904) and Wheatley, (1961), and also Jacques, (1979) in *ESEA*.

[89]For the Sanskritization of place names see Duroiselle, (1922-23) in *ARASI*.

[90]See Wolters, (1982), and Jacques, (1979) in *ESEA*.

Coedès himself does not give explanation why he calls these states Indian states. They were definitely not 'India', and certainly not politically being 'Indianized.' Neither were they ruled by Indian princes nor were they colonies of Indian merchants. Wolter believes that if we can get rid of the Chinese concept of state, we will be able to accept that the development of political unit such as 'state' can happen through an indigenous process.[91] And the fact that foreign merchants traded with the cities inland rather than the coastal areas seem to show that there had already been some sort of political organization such as city-states with their kings and governments in Southeast Asia; otherwise the states or centers should have developed only in the coastal regions where the first contact took place. It is certain that their crystallization was due to Indian concept of supreme monarch such as mahārājā, sarvabhauma and cakravartin.[92] But this is only an inspiration, not the cause for the creation of these states. And the concept would not have fit nicely, had there not been the indigenous concept of 'Man of prowess.'[93]

As we have seen above from archaeological data, at around 500 B.C., a period of the initial contact between the two areas, the Southeast Asian societies had increasingly been centralized due to the development in agriculture and the use of iron. Tribal units were growing in size and in cultural complexity. Higham writes:

> The most signal variable, however, was the organization of people. Basically, what we find is this. Successive leaders of elite local families in different areas sought an unrivalled position of eminence. To achieve this, they needed to attract followers. We have already encountered this in General Period C, but the differences as we proceed, during General Period D, into the first millennium A.D., is that these overlords sought universal acknowledgment of their superior status.[94]

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[91] See Wolters, (1982).

[92] Coedès, (1953), p. 371; and also Briggs, (1972).

[93] Wolters, (1982), and Higham, (1989), pp. 239 ff.

[94] Higham, (1989), p. 239.

To obtain this acknowledgment these overlords had to attract loyal followers, establish a central court complete with large and beautiful buildings and enclosed sacred precinct as foci for ritual, ceremonial and display. Added to this is the ability to deploy force.[95] There were some of them who succeeded in manipulating all these factors and thus established political unities whose sphere of influence was expanded beyond the boundary of chiefdom. However, this was not the situation of a state with central capital and definite boundary, but rather a political unity which was fluid in terms of territory and durability.

Scholars beginning with Mabbett employed the Sanskrit term 'mandala' for this type of political entities.[96] As Higham describes "....but essentially in political terms a mandala describes a political apparatus fluid in terms of territory and therefore without fixed frontiers. Its centers on the court of the overlord, whose sway turns on attracting deference and obligations from other lords in this orbit through his alliances and overtake enemies. .... In Mabbett's term, such mandalas had, at their fringes, a shade of influence. Southeast Asia, then, had no Hadrian, but centers whose edge were fluid and of uncertain durability."[97] The development of these mandalas can be seen as the result of both original continuity of Southeast Asian culture and the influences from India and China.

Areas which sustained these mandalas were mainly riverine and lowland for the mainland Southeast Asia. These areas were situated on a strategic point, mostly at the nodal area for the intra-regional or extra-regional trade, and usually at the controlling point of the river valley, thus, acting as the gateway to the hinterland. For

[95]Ibid.

[96]Mabbett, (1978); Tambiah, (1977) translates it as 'galactic.' See discussion of the term in Wolters, (1982) chapter 3, and Higham, (1989), p. 239 ff. The concept, however, has its origin in the Arthaśāstra, see Modelski, (Sept 1964).

[97]Higham, (1989).

the maritime region including the area south of Thailand, the development of mandalas seemed to depend on the controlling of the trade routes.

Actually these are not greatly different from what Coedès has outlined in his 'The Indianized States of Southeast Asia,' summarized above. But the way scholars now look at the situations, both political and cultural, is totally different from Coedès. The situation now is either examined as the original changing, the microdynamism of Emmerson, or as the natural process of social development in which numerous factors act upon, the macrosystemism of Emmerson. They were not states in western concept; neither were they 'Indian' nor 'Indianized' which implies that without Indian civilization these political entities would never have come about. In truth, leaders and elites of Southeast Asia depended heavily on Indian concept of government, but the adoption of which has to be seen as a long and variable process to materialize; it would not have been successful without great modification, trials, and interaction with other factors.[98]

In the course of development these areas had sustained numerous mandalas which can be arranged into three periods: the Early mandalas circa first century A.D. up to ninth century A.D., or if we use the date of the establishment of the great mandalas of Angkor, the year 802, the Great Mandalas circa ninth century up to thirteen century, the Pre-modern Mandalas of Burmese and Thai people from twelfth century until the era of western colonization.

It would be inappropriate to give all the history and events of each areas consisting of these mandalas, since this is not a book on Southeast Asian history. We therefore will give names of these mandalas and their centers which will be referred to later in this study followed by their common features.

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[98]Some scholars go so far as to point out that Indian concept should be considered equal to other dynamics involving in the development of Southeast Asian society. Their ideas are discussed in Higham, (1989), p. 240.

The Early Mandalas consisted of:-

The mandalas of lower Mekong delta, known to Chinese as Funan. The inscriptions referred to their center as Vyādhapura. It lasted from c. 100 A.D. to 550 A.D.[99] The center of activities seemed to have shifted into the middle Mekong delta and the Tonle Sap plains which would be known to the Chinese as 'Zhenla.'

The 'Zhenla' mandalas, formerly understood as a kingdom which overthrew Funan, but evidences reveal that there were numerous centers competing for overlordship. The word used here to denote the area not the kingdom. Their centers were mentioned in inscriptions as Isānapura, Mahendrapura etc.[100] The name of the centers usually similar to those of kings or the overlords. These mandalas lasted until A.D. 802 when the great Angkorian Mandala was established.

The Dvāravatī mandalas, A.D. 200-950, which expanded almost all over the area now Thailand appeared to be less united than those of the aforementioned areas. Their centers were U Thong, Nakhon Pathom, Ku Bua, Lopburi, Si Thep. Dvāravatī cultures also penetrated into the Khorat plateau, but archaeological data show strong localization and also influences from the areas mentioned above.

The mandalas of central and lower Burma, the Pyu mandalas known as Śrīkṣetra, appeared to have closed relation with the Dvāravatī mandalas. Their centers were where are now Hmamza, Maungun, Beiktano.

Also the mandalas in the Malay peninsula mentioned in Chinese sources, later would be in the overlordship of the great Śrī Vijaya mandalas. Important centers were Chaiya, Nakhon Srithammarat.[101]

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[99]All the dates given here are those assigned by Higham, (1989), for the regions which are not treated in Higham, (1989), dates given by Coedès are used.

[100]For the names of these centers see Jacques, (1979) in *ESEA*.

[101]For debates on the center or capital of Śri Vijaya see D. G. E. Hall, (1977), pp. 44 ff. and Rajani, (1987).

On the middle coastal area of Viet Nam, there were the Mandalas of Champa of the Chams. Important areas of these mandalas were Amarāvatī, Vijaya, Panduranga.

The Great Mandalas

By the eighth or ninth century, the process of this type of centralization seemed to be intensified and reached its height. These mandalas were more expansive in size and more complex in the organization. Their cultures also attained significant development in the field of art and architecture. To this period we have monuments such as Angkor and Barabudur. There were three great mandalas:-

The Angkorian Mandala which covered the areas of the whole Mekong delta, Cambodia and perhaps central and northeastern part of Thailand. The major centers of the Mandala were concentrated in what is now central Cambodia.

The Śrī Vijaya Mandalas covered the lower southern part of the Malay peninsular and Sumatra. their centers were Chaiya, Nakhon Srithammarat in Thailand and Palembang in Sumatra.

The Śailendra Mandalas of Java.

The Premodern era Mandalas of the Burmese, Pagan, and the Thais.

These were the mandalas which would develop into the modern states of mainland Southeast Asia. The advent of these mandalas is believed to have coincided with the expansion and the adoption of Sri Lankan Theravāda Buddhism.

There are several common features among these mandalas. Geographically for the mainland mandalas all concentrated in the areas favorable for agriculture, we find complicated system of irrigation for controlling flood and regulating water supply in the

Mekong delta areas and the Tonle Sap plains.[102] This would result in the highly organized network of the controlling of labor, which together with the system of using temples as governmental units, eventually brought about the great Angkorian mandalas. Their location was also at the nodal point of trade route both intra-regional and extra-regional. Among archaeological founds in centers of Dvāravatī mandalas are goods from the Roman empire such as Roman lamp of second century. And most of their centers were easily accessible from the sea, some such as Nakhon Pathom was probably a sea port.[103]

Politically, they were all inspired by the Indian concept of government which developed into the system of mandalas as has already been shown above. As for how these mandalas developed, different scholars offered different answers. Some advocate the large scale irrigation as the reason, some, trade and warfare. We cannot enter into the discussion here, but it is clear that factors were many and must have been varied in different situations and time.[104] However, the central concepts that made this development possible seemed to be the fusion of the Southeast Asian concept of kingship and the Indian idea of supreme monarch with the help of Hinduism and Buddhism. We have shown above that leader or king was, actually is, regarded as religio-political person. It was by adopting the universal religions such as Hinduism or Buddhism, faiths which go beyond tribal belief, that the person of the rulers became accepted by his vassals and his people.

Socially we see the heightening of elites groups who made use of Indian civilization. Coedēs goes so far as to say that the adoption of Indian civilization is not possible without the adoption of Indian social system, that is to say caste system. It

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[102]For the studies of Khmer system of irrigation see Groslier, (1979).

[103]Higham, (1989), p. 269.

[104]Ibid., p. 240.

is true that the word 'varna' appeared in Khmer inscriptions, but there is no evidences that Khmer society had been organized in such a way that we could call it caste system. The word was borrowed to denote classes in Khmer society rather than having the meaning of 'caste.'[105]

Culturally, art and architecture show Indian influences, but not without modification through indigenous input. Some Southeast Asian designs such as Angkor and Barabudur had gone beyond their Indian inspiration in size and in complexity. Sanskrit and Pāli were found used in inscriptions, but local languages also made themselves felt. For instance:- in the mandalas of middle Mekong and the Tonle Sap delta, ancient Khmer was used in inscriptions side by side with Sanskrit; in the Dvāravatī mandalas, ancient Mon; in Śrīkṣetra, Pyu. However, the usage of Indian languages and the local ones were different, the Indian languages being used for eulogizing gods, Buddha and kings, the local languages being used for list of offerings and of names of persons designated to take care of sanctuaries. In the areas where Buddhism prevailed there were also inscriptions using only vernacular tongues to record meritorious deeds. Sanskrit and Pāli were found used both in the service of the king and religions. In case of where Pāli Buddhism prevailed, Pāli seemed to be the religious language, and Sanskrit the royal language.

There were also evidences that they were constantly related to each other. We find art and architecture styles which reflect influences from the region outside, Khmer style found in central Thailand, Dvāravatī style is evident also in Śrī Vijaya art found in the south of Thailand. The relationship was probably mostly peaceful in the same manner as Indian cultures came to Southeast Asia.

Judging from the volatility of their political situation, the expansion of these mandalas would be cultural expansion and not territorial. However, this does not

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[105]See supra footnote 68 of this chapter; and Mabbett, (1977).

mean that the latter kind of expansion was not possible, but its activities and impact lasted only for a short time, usually only in the reign of that mighty overlord. We can thus safely say that these mandalas can be seen as culturally centralized centers, and at times some or one of them became culturally dominant beyond their spheres. Therefore, when we use names of these mandalas in this study, the cultural sense is intended. Study of these relations probably can be called re-localization or sub-regionalization.

Among these regions we can discern, in terms of religions, two axes, the first one from West of Burma to East of Thailand, the area in which Hīnayāna Buddhism seemed to be the dominant feature; the second from Cambodia to the Southern part of Southeast Asia, the archipelago, the area in which Hinduism and Mahāyāna Buddhism dominated.

Without these religions Indian cultures in Southeast Asia would not last and persist until the present day. On the other hand, if Hinduism and Buddhism had not been used by their overlords, these faiths would not have had strong influences in this region. Through Hinduism and Buddhism, scripts, literature, law and political concept came to Southeast Asia. And through them Southeast Asian people heightened their cultures and concepts, applying Indian cultures to different fields such that we can study this region as a whole.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION OF BUDDHISM INTO SOUTHEAST ASIA: TRADE, MISSION AND PILGRIMAGE

Every book on Southeast Asian Buddhism has a tradition of beginning with the introduction of Buddhism into the area.[1] The problem is probably not the introduction itself, but rather how, when, by whom, from which part of India, to what part of Southeast Asia Buddhism was first introduced. The last question sometimes also involves the pride of the first nation to become Buddhist.[2]

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[1]There are very few books on "History of Buddhism in Southeast Asia" per se. The standard works were written by Nihar-Ranjan Ray in 1936, *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, and in 1946, *An Introduction to the study of Theravāda Buddhism in Burma*. However, he used only the data found in Burma and did not see the introduction of Buddhism in Southeast Asia as a whole. The rest of scholarship is mainly works done in the disciplines of Sociology and Anthropology, thus using and interpreting only the present data. And since the region is considered to be Theravādin exclusively, Buddhism in those works only means Theravāda Buddhism.

[2]See for example Muang Htin Aung's article "Burmese Buddhist Historiography," in *IAHA* II: 1123-1136. He uses the Burmese chronicles to claim that there was a group of monks visiting Burma in 508 B.C., reasoning as follows: "The chronicles claimed that the Buddha visited both lower and upper Burma. Many countries in Southeast Asia and Ceylon also made the same claim. Because of the distance, the sea, the terrain, those countries explained that the Buddha came flying, using His supernatural powers. With regard to one visit, the Burmese chronicles mentioned that He came in a more prosaic way, by ship. In addition, they were precise as to the date for he particular visit; it was in the 20th year of the Buddhist ministry. From this the modern historian could conclude that in B.C. 508 a group of adventurous monks penetrated Burma, bringing with them the new religion." Since he did not give any data to substantiate his point except for these chronicles, we are in no position to know how he can be sure about the date. Every Buddhist scholar knows that there is no such datable evidence even in the Tripiṭaka itself. Later on he concludes otherwise that Buddhism was introduced by the mission sent in Aśoka's reign. His claim is one of the best example to show that the issue involves the pride of the nation to be first Buddhist country in Southeast Asia (p. 1126):

> The "official" introduction of Buddhism into Burma took place in B.C. 247 when Asoka's mission of monks reached Suvannabhumi, "the golden land". There had been unnecessary controversy among modern scholars as to the exact location of Suvannabhumi, some arguing that it was not in Lower Burma but either in the valley of the Menam Chao Phya or the northern part of the Malay Peninsula. All these three regions at the time belonged to the Mons who were then the dominant race in the western half of mainland Southeast Asia. Their land was land of gold and its great port and the capital was Thaton in Lower Burma. Ships from India and Ceylon did not yet dare to go round the Malay Peninsular and they discharged their cargoes at Thaton, from where the precious goods were carried further east overland along the portage routes... Thus Asoka's mission landed at Thaton and Buddhism became the official and national religion of the Mons.

In this chapter we shall try to solve these problems, keeping in mind that the introduction of Buddhism was not a moment but a process which requires time. Now Buddhism was a living faith and flourished in India for more than fifteen centuries. Developments and changes occurred in the course of time. And the contact in terms of religion between India and Southeast Asia would be affected by these developments. Therefore, it is likely that it is not just one introduction but introductions; and not introduction of one type of Buddhism, but numerous types of Buddhism, sometimes at the same time. This fact, together with the extensive area exposed to Indian cultures to which Buddhism belongs, even makes the issue more complicated, since this accounts for the possibility of different places being exposed to different types of Buddhism at the same time. And it is very probable that some regions did not adopt Buddhism directly from India.

The Sri Lankan chronicles attribute the introduction of Buddhism into Southeast Asia to the mission sent from India in Aśoka's reign.[3] However, there is no evidence to support this story, either archaeological or epigraphical. If we accept the story, the introduction of Buddhism would be a very simple event, the only factor involved would be only two monks who came to the region and converted people. Historically speaking, the introduction of Buddhism was not even a process in itself, but only a part of the process of Indianization in which trade, mission and pilgrimage, as well as the effort from within Southeast Asia culture itself, played an important role.

Be that as it may, we still have to refer to the problem of the location of Suvarṇabhūmi together with the mission related in the Sri Lankan chronicles, since recent scholarship is still haunted by misconceptions concerning these two matters. They shall be dealt with in the topic of trade and mission respectively.

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[3]That is to say if we admit without any doubt that Suvarṇabhūmi is Southeast Asia.

Trade relation between India, Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia

The importance of trade as an agent has been appreciated by scholars of the past. Some have gone so far as to take it for the sole agent of the process of Indianization. However, with better understanding of the facts revealed by epigraphical and archaeological data, the idea is regarded as inadequate.[4] The main objection is based on the high culture of Indian civilization such as the use of Sanskrit endowed with all poetic embellishments. Whatever the case may be, any contact between these areas would not be possible without trade, since this was the only way to transport the human factors such as Brahmans or monks, and other materials such as objects of worship in the process of acculturation.

The nature of trade relation between India and Southeast Asia is thus crucial to the spread of Buddhism outside of its original place. The same situation can also be found in case of the spread of Buddhism to Central Asia and China.[5] Nevertheless, since the circumstances were not actually the same the characteristics of Buddhism in the two regions are different. In order to understand the trade between these regions we shall have to look at the dynamics involved in trade which are the port of departure, the destination, the routes and the merchants.

The Nature of Trade Relations between India, Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia has been considered as the bridge and at the same time a barrier to the trade between India and China.[6] This fact, which is sometimes

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[4]See Hall, (1977), pp. 18-19; and also Coedès, (1968), pp. 21 ff.

[5]Relation between trade and monastic system has been studied by H. P. Ray, (1986), *Monastery and Guild*. For the contact between China and India by means of the land route see Xinru Liu, (1988), *Ancient India and Ancient China: Trade and Religious Exchanges AD 1-600.*

[6]The description of the circumstance is best depicted in Wheatley, (1961), pp xviii-xx. He traces the role of the peninsula back to prehistorical time when it served as the "gigantic causeway over which a succession of cultures had diffused imperceptibly from the mainland of Asia toward the Archipelago, the South-West pacific and Australasia." However, during the first fifteen hundred years of historical period, it assumed the role of barrier because it situates almost exactly half-way between India and

overemphasized, has caused us to see Southeast Asia as merely a resting area for merchants, not their final destination. But the picture that we can construct from the sources does not agree with this idea. In the Indian sources Southeast Asia was always a final destination, of course not the only one, but it is not just a bridge between India and China. We also have from the same sources evidence which shows that not only the Indian merchants were involved in trade, but also the Southeast Asians.[7] We also have to take into account the intra-regional trade which was evidently flourishing around the second half of the first millennium B.C.[8]

Even in the case of trade between India and China in the ancient time when the knowledge of navigation was not advanced, extra-regional trade probably required more than one-sided effort. We can reconstruct the situation such that Indian ships would sail to Southeast Asia for the purpose of using cities along the east coast of the peninsula as entrepôts. Then ships of other countries, Southeast Asian states or China, would carry on the other half of the route. This was evidently the practice of those days as it was recorded by Chinese monks who went to India using the sea route.[9]

China. Another reason is that the area is affected by the monsoon which changes direction during the year. The sailing has to be complied to the direction of this monsoon.

[7]There are evidences in texts such as Jātaka that the ship was originally from Southeast Asia, see for example Jātaka No. 463 and Jātakamāla No. XIV. See also Majumdar, (1927), pp. 35 ff.

[8]For Protohistorical period see Ian C. Clover's article, 'Indian-Thai Exchanges in the Protohistorical period,' in *RCESEA*, (1985); for historical period see Himanshu Ray's article, 'Early Maritime Contacts Between South and Southeast Asia,' in *JSEAS*, XX, No.1, pp 42-54.
For intra-regional trade see articles by Bennet Bronson, Jan Wisseman Christiė, Phasook Indrawooth and Mayuree Veraprasert under the topic:Trade and Communications within Southeast Asia in *RCESEA*, (1985).

[9]The routes used by merchants and pilgrims and the conditions of these travels were reported mainly by Chinese pilgrims such as Fa-hsien. Studies on these routes are Wheatley, (1961). The details of Chinese records are given in part one, China and the Malay Peninsula: an Examination of the Chinese Records Relating to Malaya before A.D. 1500. A. Grimes's article 'The Journey of Fa-Hsien from Ceylon to Canton,' in *JRASMB* XIX, part 1, 1941, pp. 76-92. The latter is a scientific researches on the journey based on the study of wind system. It also furnishes us with detailed maps of the wind system and a route map proposed by Gile and Grimes. For the routes used by other Buddhist missions see W. Pachow's article,'The Voyage of Buddhist Missions to South-East Asia and Far East,' in *JGIS* XVII, No. 1-2, 1958, pp. 1-22.

Indian literature, both Buddhist and Brahmanical, does not really give data on the routes used in the trade between these regions.[10] But it does give us the seaports from which the merchants departed. In the Jātaka stories,[11] Mahāniddesa[12] and the Milindapañha,[13] they were Bharukaccha, Supparaka, and Kālacampaka; in Mahākarmavibhanga,[14] Mahākośalī and Tāmralipti. Hence, the ships would set sail from either coast of India. If the Jātakas, the Mahāniddesa, and the Milindapañha were taken to be of earlier origin, that is to say not later than the second century A.D. and in case of the Mahāniddesa, the third century A.D.[15] The most frequented seaports would be on the west coast, Bharukaccha and Suppāra. These two seaports were also mentioned by the classical accounts as the seaports to the Western world.[16] The trade among the Western world, the Indian subcontinent, and Southeast

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[10]The descriptions of the route in Indian literature are usually mythical. In the Jātaka stories none of the journey has reached Suvarṇabhūmi. An appendix titled 'Notes on Indian texts mentioned above in Chapter XVIII,' in Wheatley, (1961), p. 204 ff. gives a short summary of the literature in which the names Suvarṇabhūmi and Suvarṇadvīpa appears.

[11]Jātaka, No. 39, 360, 463.

[12]Nd. I: 154-155.

[13] Milindapañha, pp. 331, 359.

[14]Mahākarmavibhanga, p. 50 ff.

[15]For the discussion and different opinion on the date of these works see S. Lévi's (1925) article "Ptolémée, le Niddesa et la Bṛhatkathā," in *Études Asiatiques II*, p. 51, and Majumdar's book (1927), *Suvarṇadvīpa*, p. 58. Majumdar thinks that "The list of Niddesa must have been drawn up between the end of the first and the beginning of the third century A.D." This dating is challenged by Niharjan Ray, (1946), p. 5. He seems to believe that the Pāli canon should be compiled around the sixth or the fifth century B.C., see p. 2.

[16]Lévi expresses his surprise in his article "Ptolémée, le Niddesa and le Bṛhatkathā," in *Études Asiatiques II* as follows:

> On est surprise de constater que, dans ce périple qui s'étend de l'Extrême-Orient à l'Extrême-Occident, la côte orientale de l'Inde ne figure absolument pas. Il y aura peut-être là un indice pour déterminer la région où le Niddesa a été composé.

K.R. Norman, (1976) in his article's "The role of Pāli in early Sinhalese Buddhism", in Heinz Bechert (ed.) *Buddhism in Ceylon and Studies on Religious Syncretism in Buddhist Countries, (Symposien zur Buddhisimusforschung, I)*, seems also to have suggested that early relation between India and Sri Lanka was also flourishing along the western coast of India rather than the eastern. In page 29 of his article he says "Tradition has it that Vijaya and his followers arrived in Ceylon on the day that the Buddha died (Mhvs 6.47). Vijaya came from N. India, from the kingdom of Lāla lay between Vanga (Bengal) and Magadha, it is identified by some with Ptolemy's Λαρικη = modern Gujarat (DPPN s.v.),

Asia had left evidence in some archaeological sites, not only on the seaport but also in the inland towns.[17] Even if these remains are not of religious kind, we cannot totally rule out the possibility of the religious contacts among these regions. It is true that we do not possess any object as ancient as third century B.C.[18] which would belong to the period of the Mauryan Empire in India, but in view of the poor archaeological findings even in India itself, we could hardly expect much of them outside India. The only way to trace these relations is in the art form which seems to show the continuation from that period. One example is the Dharmacakras found in central Thailand which is reminiscent of the Aśoka pillar at Sañcī.[19] And if the place names which in most cases were named after important places in India can be used as evidence, names such as Dvāravatī, Kambujadesa are derived from place names in the west of India.

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and this would agree with the statement that on the way to Ceylon Vijaya landed at Suppāraka, i.e. modern Sopāra (Mhvs 6.46), Bharukacchu, i.e. modern Broach (Dpvs 9.26)."

[17]For details on these early archaeological finds from Indian and Roman Empire see Higham, (1989), pp. 270-279.

[18] Higham, (1989), pp. 242-244, gives the approximate date of the contact between Southeast Asia and India at around 300 B.C. and A.D. 300. He did not give any solid data except for saying "If Indian merchant guilds prospered on the western trade route, why not also in an easterly direction? The seasonal wind pattern across the Bay of Bengal reflects the regular rise and ebb of the monsoon, and maritime technology was well equipped to cope with the necessary distances... The fact that Indian merchant venturers did sail eastward in growing numbers, and their exploits were incorporated into Hindu epic literature. The fable land beyond the sunrises is referred to in Indian literature as Suvarṇabhūmi, or Suvarṇadvīpa, which meant 'land of gold'. Gold there was to be found, but the voyages were according to the Rāmāyana, beset by storms and other perils." Along this line of reasoning he thinks that the trade was then motivated by the prohibition of exporting gold coinage from the Roman Empire in the reign of Vespasian in A.D. 69. He described the Indian merchants who were trading with Southeast Asia as "came from a country with a sophisticated and mature tradition of statehood. They were familiar with the notion of a supreme monarch, and inherited the established role of the brāhman in both ritual and state administration." We do not know where Higham got the information of 'the fable land beyond the sunrise,' which would definitely put Suvarṇabhūmi, or Suvarṇadvīpa in the east of India. However, so far we cannot find any texts that gives us information about its direction. And certainly the mature political concepts at around that time was still very much in doubt. Of course, the concept of a supreme monarch did exist and figure in the texts in both Buddhist and Hindu tradition, but more or less as an ideal state, rather than the real event. The merchants cannot and, probably in Indian context, should not inherit the established role of the brāhman either in ritual or administration.

[19]See Dhanit Yupho, (1974), for Dharmacakras found in Thailand. See also chapter 4 under the topic "archaeological data."

Later, the seaport on the East of India, especially of the southern part, were more common in the records especially those of the Chinese.[20] The evidence of influence by the civilization of South India, both epigraphical and archaeological are in abundance.[21] When we use the word 'South India' here we have to take Sri Lanka in to account too, since it stands as the center for ships from the West as well as from the East.[22] From this fact, Ray's contention that Pāli Buddhism in the Pyu kingdom only had its source from South India would be rather too narrow, since we cannot possibly rule out early contact between Sri Lanka and the Pyu.[23] Moreover, the relation between South Indian Buddhism and Sri Lankan Buddhism was evident at that time as a Sri Lankan inscription found in Nāgārjunakonda stated that missionaries from Sri Lanka had spread Sri Lankan Buddhism to several places in India.[24]

From Sri Lanka or some other East coast seaport of India, the ships would continue to the high sea, the island, Nicobar, known as the Naga island, seemed to have served as a station. From there the ships continued to Southeast Asia, mostly to the peninsula, then used the coastal route to the archipelago or the transpeninsular route, either land route or water ways to the East of the peninsula.[25] It is a

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[20]For the location of these seaport see Wheatley, (1961), pp. 9, 34, 40, 44, 53, 64, etc.

[21]For detailed studies of the influence see Chhabra, (1965), *Expansion of Indo-Aryan Culture during Pallava Rule*. His assertion on the supremacy of Pallava script has been questioned by de Casparis, (1979) in *ESEA*, pp. 382 ff.

[22]The list in Niddesa, Milindapañha and Mahākarmavibhanga always give the name of Sri Lanka as either Tambapaṇṇi or Sinhaladvīpa. The name is always mentioned right after Suvarṇabhūmi: Nd. I:155 "Suvaṇṇakūṭam gacchati, Suvaṇṇabhūmim gacchati, Tambapaṇṇi gacchati, Suppāram gacchati..", Mahākarmavibhanga, p. 53, "Suvarṇabhūmiṃ Simhaladvāpaṃ ca prabhṛtāni paśyanti." See also Wheatley, (1961), pp. 42 ff. Norman, (1976), pp. 29 ff., and also (1980) pp. 66 ff., discussing about the issue of the origin place of Pāli give some evidence that Sri Lanka was a popular port in the trade route of the time.

[23]N. Ray, (1946), pp. 29 ff. See infra. chapter 4.

[24]See *EI*, XX:22, and infra chapter 4.

[25]For references on these routes see Wheatley, (1961), especially part IV, The Isthmian Age.

geographical fact that only a few bays on the West of Malay peninsula provide good shelter for ships, and they cannot sustain a big community. All the big city-states thus were on the East of the peninsula. That the merchants kept using these transpeninsular routes shows that these cities had already been well established when the trade relation started.

When the merchants reached Southeast Asia, the route that seemed to be most frequented was the upper part of the Malay peninsula which is termed by Wheatley as the Isthmian part. The route then penetrated to the central part of Thailand and continued eastward along the coast as well as the river valleys of the area. Or if the ships sailed to the lower part of the Isthmian area, they would use the transpeninsular ways to the east coast.[26] From these cities in the east they had two choices, either continue along the coast northward or cut across the Gulf of Thailand to the areas around the Mekong delta.

The areas along these routes were the earliest to be affected by the Indian civilization as we find at least fifteen sites which belong to the Funanese culture, the earliest Indianized culture of Southeast Asia, in Central Thailand.[27] Considering that

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[26]For the studies of these transpeninsular routes see Klin Khongmuaenphet, (1988), and M.C. Chand Chirayu Rajani, (1987), p. iii.

[27]Boisselier has tried to argue that the centers of Funan culture should be in central of Thailand rather than in the delta area of the Mekong. He wrote two articles in effect of this theory; "U-Thong et Son Importance pour l'Histoire de la Thaïlande" and "Nouvelle Donnes sur l'Histoire Ancienne de la Thaïlande". Both articles were published in *Archaeology, Maung U-Thong*. (in Thai: *Boranavithaya Raung Maung U-Thong*) (B.E.2509 = A.D. 1966). However, later on 1980 it seems that he has abandoned his idea as he wrote in *Oriental Art: A Handbook of Styles and Forms* p. 229 ".. there existed in the south of the peninsula (in this case the southern part of Vietnam), in the very earliest centuries of the Christian era, an Indianized kingdom called Fu-nan, mentioned in Chinese texts. Almost nothing is known about the art of this kingdom to which mere handful of objects (seals, some gems) found at Oc-èo can be attributed with certainty. For a while it was thought possible that another, larger group of objects might be from Fu-nan, but this theory has been disproved by most recent excavations in Thailand (especially those at U Thong), which show that the objects in question cannot have been made earlier than the 7th or 8th century." However, the similarity between the objects found in central of Thailand and those of Oc-èo cannot be denied. The centers of the Fu-nan culture might not be in Thailand, but both areas certainly had had some contacts, at least in terms of culture, in those days. For the detailed studies of the sites at Oc-èo see Malleret (1953-1963). For these pre-Dvāravatī culture in Thailand see Higham, (1989), pp. 269 ff., and also articles of Mayuree Veraprasert, Srisakra Vallibhotama in *RCESEA*, (1985), pp. 168-169; 247-258.

religion is part of a civilization, the influence of Buddhism as well as Hinduism must have been felt soon after the contact between the two areas.

As for the land beyond the sea, the land routes or the river routes were used in trade. This would help to spread the religion into the other part of Southeast Asia. These cities, which were not seaports, were the centers of trade and culture in their own right.[28] Evidence shows that they were involved also in the international trade, since we find two votive tablets inscribed in Sanskrit and Chinese in Si Thep, an ancient site in the Basak valley in upper Central Thailand.[29]

The other condition of sailing in the Indian Ocean is the monsoon. Usually ships would use the Northeast monsoon which blows from the North to the South to start off from India and then wait for the Southwest Monsoon to continue to the land to the East. Thus, the Malay peninsula was the most exposed to Indian culture and would be the first in the region to feel the change and development in India. On the contrary, the inner part of the region such as Central Burma or Central Thailand, Cambodia would have more time to appropriate Indian culture and thus reveal more of their own local styles.

Of all the data gathered from Indian and Sri Lankan sources, the land to the East was always thought to be referred to as Suvarṇabhūmi. Scholars have tried to identify Suvarṇabhūmi as the Mon kingdom of South Burma. Some suggest Central Thailand, others suggest the Malay peninsula, and maritime Southeast Asia. Since the identification of this term directly connects with the introduction of Buddhism, it should be treated in detail.

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[28]See Dhida Saraya's article in *RCESEA*, (1985), pp. 259-282.

[29]Ibid., and also *Ancient Inscriptions found in Lopburi and its Vicinity* (in Thai, *Charu'k boran run raek phob thi Lopburi lae thi klay khieng* (B.E. 2524 = A.D. 1981), pp. 99 ff.

Where is Suvarṇabhūmi?

There are numerous references to Suvarṇabhūmi in Indian literature, both Hindu and Buddhist.[30] All of them give an impression of the land to the East of India where adventurers went to seek their fortune. We also find other names such as Suvarṇadvīpa, Suvarṇakūḍya, Dvīpāntara, which refer to the same area or the areas nearby.[31]

Scholars seem to agree on one point that Suvarṇabhūmi is situated in Southeast Asia. But this is also where the agreement ends, and the argument on which regions of Southeast Asia Suvarṇabhūmi is situated starts.

The references made by the Indians are always clouded by mythical and adventurous spirit, therefore, do not really help to solve the problem. Some of the Jātakas give the routes and ports frequented by merchants at that time. But the destination is always mentioned simply as Suvarṇabhūmi without any further information of its whereabout. However, in some of Buddhist literatures we find lists of places mentioned along with Suvarṇabhūmi, and this can give us some idea of where and what Suvarṇabhūmi was considered to be at that time.

The oldest mentioning of Suvarṇabhūmi is probably in Mahāniddesa, a canonical work dated around 250 B.C. The text runs as follows:-

> (people) when seeking for wealth would set sail to the ocean.... to Gumba, Takkola, Takkasila, Kālamukha, Maranapāra, Vesunga, Verāpatha, Javā, Tamalī, Vanga, Elavaddana, Suvaṇṇakūta, Suvaṇṇabhūmi, Tambapaṇṇi, Suppāra, Bharukaccha, Surattha, Anganeka, Gangana, Paramagangana, Yonam, Paramayona, Yona, Allasanda...[32]

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[30]For detailed studies of these sources see Lévi, (1925) in *Études Asiatiques* II: 1-55; Majumdar, (1927); Wheatley, (1961); Dhanit Yupho, (in Thai, B.E. 2503?); M.C Chand Chirayu Rajani, (1987); K. Hall, (1985).

[31]See K. A. Nilakantha Sastri's article "Dvīpāntara", in *JGIS*, IX: 1-4.

[32]Nd. I:154-155. Athavā kāmataṇhāya abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto bhoge pariyessanto nāvāya mahāsamuddaṃ pakkhandati, ... Gumbaṃ gacchati, Takkolaṃ gacchati, Kālamukhaṃ gacchati, Maranapāraṃ gacchati, Vesuṅgaṃ gacchati, Verāpathaṃ gacchati, Javaṃ gacchati, Tamaliṃ gacchati, Vaṅgaṃ gacchati, Elavaddanaṃ gacchati, Suvaṇṇakūṭaṃ gacchati, Suvaṇṇabhūmiṃ gacchati, Tambapaṇṇiṃ gacchati. Suppāraṃ gacchati, Bharukacchaṃ gacchati, Suraṭṭhaṃ gacchati, Aṅganekaṃ

It seems that the author of Mahāniddesa had a very foggy idea about the places cited. There are places in the passage which are in India and accessible by land routes only such as Takkasila, and some are sea ports in India itself. The sequences of the places mentioned are not in order. Lévi in his article 'Ptolémée, le Niddesa et la Bṛhatkathā,'[33] tries to identify these place names with those mentioned in Ptolemy. He places Takkola in the area around the Kra isthmus. Consequently, Takkasila poses serious problem, if Lévi wants to keep the sequence of these places in Southeast Asia, since Takkasila is in the Northwest of India. Ptolemy comes to his rescue by giving a name 'Tokosanna,' a place identified as in Burma. With the equation of these two names through linguistic method, Lévi places this Takkasila as the same as Ptolemy's Tokosanna. He does the same with Vanga which is the name of Bengal, but since this does not fit the list described sea voyages; he identifies it with Banka, an island near Sumatra, giving the lack of professional competence of the author of Mahāniddesa in terms of Geography as an excuse. He then goes on to identify the following names with locations in maritime Southeast Asia. However, for Suvarṇabhūmi, he maintains great precaution in identifying, only saying that it must be the area east of the Bay of Bengal, and the terms should be treated as the directional names, and not as regional.[34]

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gacchati, Gaṅganaṃ gacchati, Paramagaṅganaṃ gacchati, Yonaṃ gacchati, Paramayonaṃ gacchati, Allasandaṃ gacchati....

[33]Lévi, (1925) in *Études Asiatiques*, II: 1-55.

[34]Ibid., p. 29. Lévi's comment on the two names, Suvarṇakūḍya and Suvarṇabhūmi is as follows:

> Les deux noms suivants, Suvaṇṇakūṭa and Suvaṇṇabhūmi, doivent être traités ensemble. L'un d'eux, Suvaṇṇabhūmi "la terre d'or" est une appellation classique bien connue, qui correspond à la Chrysê des Grecs et des Latins. Il serait dangereux d'en préciser à l'excés de valeur; c'est plutôt une direction, comme nous disons; les Indes Orientales, les Indes Occidentales. Suvaṇṇabhūmi, c'est en gros les pays situés à l'est du golfe du Bengale, ce que Ptolémée appelle l'Inde Outre-Gange (η εχτοσ Γαγγον Ινδιχη)....

He speculates more on the name "Suvarṇakūḍya," and also gives more references in the Sanskrit literature concerning the products of this region. Actually it is this name that we have a work assuring that it is in the east of India but not without mythical suggestion:

The discrepancy in Lévi's exposition is in trying to give the directional sequence for these places. That the list cannot be taken sequentially is clearly shown by names such as Takkasila identified by Lévi as Tokosanna which is in the north of Takkola. In doing so he violates the sequence which is supposed to be southwardly describing locations in the West of the Malay peninsula down to the Archipelago.

Adding to this, Takkola, Suvaṇṇakūṭa (Suvarṇakūḍya), even Tambapaṇṇi, generally agreed to be Sri Lanka etc., can also be found in Indian subcontinent itself. Law also identifies both Suvarṇakūḍya and Suvarṇabhūmi as Suvarṇakūḍya and Suvarṇagiri in India.[35] Had there been no description of Suvarṇabhūmi in the Jātaka and other sources as definitely a place that has to be reached by sea from India, even if there is no indication that it was a seaport, we would have had to agreed with Law.[36] However, this objection can be set aside easily, since it was a common practice in Southeast Asia to name a city or a region after an Indian name.[37]

> Le Saddharma smṛtyupasthāna sūtra, ... , place à l'Est de Jambudvīpa, dans la mer de Joyeux, "une île appellée Muraille d'Or; elle est toute recouverte d'un sol d'or; elle est habitée par des démons effroyables d'aspect de grande puissance'.

[35]B.C. Law (1987) pp. 62-63. He says, in the context of the list mentioned in the mission sent out to different countries after the Third Council, "As regards Suvaṇṇabhūmi, it is suggested that probably the original place-name was Suvaṇṇagiri, which was the seat of southern viceroyalty in Aśoka's time in view of the fact that the *Dīpavamsa* description differs materially from that in the *Mahāvamsa* . In the footnote he quoted the two passages from the texts mentioned , adding "Cf. *Samantapāsādikā*, I, pp. 68 ff., where both the descriptions are given without any comment. The earlier chronicle (i.e. Dīpavamsa), does not place the country on the sea-shore and associates its with the Piśācas.

[36]See supra. the previous footnote.

[37]On the Sanskrit and the Pāli place-names see Duroiselle's article in *ARASI* (192-23) pp. 173-174. His description concerns only in Burma, but is also applicable in other regions of Southeast Asia:

> A large number of districts, town and even villages in Burma possess two names and sometimes more. Of these, only one is thoroughly Burmese and generally known among people, the other or others being either imported from India through the medium of the sacred books of Buddhism and their commentaries, or coined on the model of those existing in India, The former type names may be called classical and the latter type, pseudo-classical. The origin of this practice of renaming already existing towns is not far to seek, and may be referred, in the first instance, to the desire of a people freshly converted to a new faith (Buddhism in this case), to sanctify, so to say, their own land, and to identify it as closely as possible with the land in which the new cult originated. Thus they made Buddha come over to Burma on many mission, or the locus of some of his births in previous existences was placed in Burma. ... Secondly, it may be attributed to the pride of the Burmese race, and to its endeavour to affiliate the Burmese dynasties not only to the great dynasties of India, such as the Solar and

The only reason that makes us think of these places as being outside India is the phrase 'set sail to the ocean.'[38] However, as Lévi accepts names such as Suppāra, Bharukaccha, Surattha etc., as Indian cities and seaports, the statement fails to carry any weight here. Hence, we cannot fully agree with him when he draws the conclusion that the list in Mahāniddesa conforms with Ptolemy's description.

Now let us consider the seaports of India given in the list. All of them are situated in the West of India, but the destinations, if their identification made by Lévi is correct, are all in the East. From this point we would expect that these seaports on the Indian side should be in the East of India. Otherwise we have to assume that the authors of Mahāniddesa as well as Milindapañha and Jātaka lived in the Western part of India and did not have any geographical knowledge of the Eastern part of India. Or the trading activities were between the Western world i.e., the Middle East and Roman Empire, India and Southeast Asia, once the ship had arrived at the seaport west of India, it went around the Comarin cape passing Sri Lanka and then, cut across the ocean directly toward Southeast Asia.

> Lunar, but above all to show the direct descent of Burmese kings from the clan of the Sakyas, of which the Buddha was a member..... As to their age, M. Duroiselle thinks that "some of these, such as Mweyin on the upper Irrawaddy, Sriksetra or Old Prome and Hamsavati (pegu) go back to soon after the beginning of the Christian era, while others, mostly in the Deltaic Provinces, must have been transplanted after the 5th-6th century A.D. Most of them, however, do not antedate the 11th century, when the purer form of Buddhism imported from Thaton spread rapidly, all over the upper country, and when devotion and scriptural learning were intense.

The same situation happened also in Thailand especially placenames which are used in the chronicles such as Camadevīvamsa, Jinakālamālinī. In these chronicles Buddha is also said to have come to different parts of Thailand, and gave the prediction that such and such a town or a great stūpa enshrining his relics will be there in future The four great sites, i.e. Buddha's birthplace etc., are also believed by most of the people to have been in Thailand. These places are famous pilgrimages. The Thai and the Khmer also affiliate their royal line to the great Vamsa of India. In view of this article N. Ray's, (1946), p. 32 assertion that the mentioning of place-names such as Hamsāvatī, Sudhammavati in the Pāli texts, canonical and commentarial, was after the towns in Burma should be discarded. The situation was probably the other way around. These Pali and Sanskrit names seem to have two sets, the first set is Pāli names as used in canonical works, but in the Buddhist chronicles of Burma and Thailand they are used to refer to towns in these two countries. Hence the North of Burma or Thailand, considering themselves in Magadha, would be called Kashmir, China would be called Vesālī etc. Another set is official names for the royal record, they usually have the Sanskrit form.

[38]See supra. chapter 3, footnote 32.

In other sources such as the Mahākarmavibhanga and the Pāli commentaries as well as collections of tales in Sri Lanka Tamralipti, an eastern seaport, is mentioned as the departing point for merchants who want to go to Suvarṇabhūmi. This would support the idea that Suvarṇabhūmi is a region to the east of India. Nevertheless, the Mahākarmavibhanga always mentions Suvarṇabhūmi before Sīhaladvīpa (Sri Lanka), if we were to take this as a sequence of places, Suvarṇabhūmi would be nearer to the author than Sīhaladvīpa, in this case Law's suggestion carries some weight in the arguing that Suvarṇabhūmi is Suvarṇagiri, a viceroyalty in Aśoka time. On the other hand these two places might mean to the author as some places so far away that he does not have any idea about their geographical location, and thus should not be taken literally.[39]

In Indian geographical terms, a region is usually designated by 'deśa, patha,' affixed to names such as Madhyadeśa, Dakshinapatha etc.; for a city only the name is given. Reexamining the list in Mahāniddesa we find that regions and cities are mentioned in a mixed manner. Nevertheless, names such as Suvarṇakūḍya and Suvarṇabhūmi, being affixed by 'geographical terms' should be taken as names of regions not of cities or seaports.

Therefore, in the Indian sources the word Suvarṇabhūmi or Suvarṇadvīpa could mean an area in India itself as well as a region probably to the East of India, not a state nor a city. If the text does not provide the description of the route, we cannot be totally sure that it means the land outside of India. In the case that the route is mentioned, that is it can be reached only by sea, we then can be more secure in identifying it as being in Southeast Asia.

The region was well frequented by Indian merchants who travelled to and fro by their ships as well as by ships from Suvarṇabhūmi. The rest of the description of

[39]See supra. chapter 3, footnote 22.

the region as rich with gold might have some truth in it since the region from South of Thailand down to Malaysia is rich with gold and other minerals.[40] So far as the evidence permits us we have to conclude that Indian authors had a very vague idea of where and what Suvarṇabhūmi was.

As for other names such as Suvarṇadvīpa, Suvarṇapura, Kañcanapura which appear in Sanskrit literatures, Majumdar observes that

> Thus, in addition to the generic name Suvarṇabhūmi, or gold-land, we have references to gold-island, gold-peninsula, and gold-city. It seems to be quite clear, therefore, that Suvarṇabhūmi was used primarily as a vague general designation of an extensive region, but in course of time, different part of it came to be designated by the additional epithets of island, peninsula (dvīpa), or city (pura).[41]

However, after reviewing Classical and Arabic sources, he comes to a conclusion that Suvarṇabhūmi was used as a common designation for Burma, Malay peninsula, and Sumatra, and Suvarṇadvīpa was applied for Sumatra and other islands in the Archipelago.[42]

This conclusion goes very well with the two terms used by Classical sources, presumably the translation of Suvarṇabhūmi and Suvarṇadvīpa: Suvarṇabhūmi is called Khryse Khora, and Suvarṇadvīpa, Khryse Khersonese. But the Classical sources only assures us that Suvarṇabhūmi is a region in Southeast Asia. It is quite obvious that Ptolemy also uses these two terms to designate regions, not states and not cities, since he describes towns, seaports of the regions later.[43]

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[40] Wheatley, (1961), pp. xxii-xxiii, figures 2-3.

[41] Majumdar, (1927), p. 46.

[42] Ibid., p. 48.

[43] Wheatley, (1961) part II, The Malay Peninsula as Known to the West, pp. 123 ff.

The Chinese also provides us numerous place names in Southeast Asia. The only name that comes close to Suvarṇabhūmi is Jin-lin, which can be translated as 'Frontier of Gold.'[44] This might be a translation of Suvarṇakūḍya or Suvarṇabhūmi. Lévi suggests that the first word 'Jin' is a translation of 'suvarṇa,' and 'lin' is a transliteration of the sound 'kūḍya,' a practice rather uncommon but not impossible to find in Chinese way of rendering foreign names. Wheatley suggests that both are transliteration of a name in local vernacular. If the later is correct, we cannot take 'Jin-lin' as a translation of Suvarṇabhūmi.[45]

Local sources do not really provide any help in specifying the exact location of Suvarṇabhūmi. All the sources are of much later date.[46] Sources from the Mon kingdom of Lower Burma such as Kalyānī inscription, written in fifteenth century (A.D. 1476), identifies it as Rāmaññadesa, that is to say the area nowadays Lower Burma.[47] The Sāsanavamsa which was composed in the nineteenth century goes further to pinpoint it to Thaton.[48] Nevertheless, the author, Paññāsāmi, had shown great scholarship in handling the issue. His identification was done through inference from the distance, and from the location:

> And among those nine places, the one named Suvarṇabhūmi is the modern city of Sudhamma (i.e. Thaton) itself. If it be asked: "Why then

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[44]For detailed discussion of this name see N. Ray, (1946) pp. 21 ff., he thinks that it refers to Burma. Wheatley, (1961), pp. 116 ff. opposes to this idea and thinks that it was the area around the golf of Thailand. See also Luce, (1974), p. 121.

[45]Lévi (1925), p. 36; Wheatley (1961), p. 117.

[46]The oldest epigraphical data on this name is an inscription of the 9th century found in India in which Sumatra is referred to as Suvarṇabhūmi. The so-called "Suvaṇṇabhūmi inscription" of Kyanzittha in A.D. 1098 does not have the name mentioned in the inscription. Therefore, it cannot be considered as the evidence in this case. Inscriptions of Jayavarman VII (11th century) mentioned the name. The next one is the inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng (A.D. 1283). Except for the aforementioned inscription no other source of any kind in Southeast Asia is older than the fifteenth century.

[47]See *EB*, II

[48]Most scholars blindly accept this identification. The first who followed was probably Majumdar. The identification was quoted and referred to, and finally became the received identification of Suvarṇabhūmi.

> is this so named? (the reply is:) by an inference from the distance, or by the inference from the location."
> How by an inference from the route?
> It is said that Suvarṇabhūmi was at a distance of as much as seven hundred yojanas from here. Ships sailing on one breeze would get there in seven days and nights. Now, as it is said in the commentary, once a ship had sailed accordingly for seven days, just as sailing on the back of a big, long in circumference fish (that from Sīhaladvīpa to Suvarṇabhūmi would be seven days.) Thus, the distance between the Sīhaladvīpa and Suvarṇabhūmi would be the same that between Sudhamma to Sīhaladvīpa. It is said that the distance from Sudhamma to Sīhala is around seven hundred yojanas. (This distance) a ship sailing with a favorable wind would reach (either place) in seven days and nights. This is the inference from the distance.
> How by an inference from the location?
> It is said that Suvarṇabhūmi is close to the ocean. It is the great harbour in which the merchants of different countries approach. Therefore, ma great multitude of people like princes etc., from cities such as Campā etc., would come by ship to Suvarṇabhūmi for trading. Now the city of Sudhamma is indeed near the ocean. This is the inference from the location.[49]

However, the inferences given are not accurate. First, the distance should be from India, and not from Sri Lanka. Second, the location described can be any place among the many harbors of Southeast Asia. Yet, the author was well aware of other opinions at that time for he added:

> But some say: Suvarṇabhūmi is Haribhuñja, giving as the reason that it has a lot of gold. Some says that it is Siam. All these should be contemplated upon.[50]

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[49]Sāsanavamsa, pp. 10-11. Tesu pana navasu ṭhānesu Suvaṇṇabhūmi nāma adhunā Sudhammanagaraṃ eva. Kasmā pan'etaṃ viññāyatā ti ce: Maggānumānato ṭhānānumānato vā. Kathaṃ maggānumānato? Ito kira Suvaṇṇabhūmiṃ sattamattāni yojanasatāni honti. Ekena vātena gacchantā nāvā sattahi ahorattehi gacchanti. Ath'ekasmin samaye evaṃ gacchantā nāvā sattāhaṃ pīnadīghāvattamacchapiṭṭhen'eva gatāti Aṭṭhakathāyaṃ vuttena Sīhaladīpato Suvaṇṇabhūmiṃ gatamaggapamāṇena Sudhammapurato Sīhaladīpaṃ gatamaggapamānaṃ sameti. Sudhammapurato kira hi Sīhaladīpam sattamattāni yojanasatāni honti. Ujuṃvāyu-āgamanakāle gacchantā vāyunāvā sattahi ahorattehi sampāpunāti. Evaṃ maggānumānato viññāyati. Katham ṭhānānumānato. Suvaṇṇabhūmi kira mahāsamuddasamāpe tiṭṭhati. Nānāverajjakānaṃ pi vāṇijānaṃ upasaṃkamanatthānabhūtaṃ mahātitthaṃ hoti. Ten'eva mahājanakakumārādayo Campānagarādito samvohāratthāya nāvāya Suvaṇṇabhūmiṃ āgacchanti. Sudhammapuraṃ pi adhunā mahāsamuddasamāpe yeva tiṭṭhati. Evaṃ ṭhānānumānato viññāyati.

[50]Ibid., p. 11. Apare pana Suvaṇṇabhūmi nāma Haribhuñjaraṭṭham yevā ti vadanti, tattha suvaṇṇassa bāhullattatā ti vadanti. Aññe pana Siyāmaraṭṭhaṃ yevā ti vadanti. Taṃ sabbaṃ vīmaṃsitabbaṃ.

Haripuñja here is Lampoon in the north of Thailand. It was the center of Theravāda Buddhism from the eighth century onward, if we were to believe the chronicles. However, nothing had been found from that early period. But we have Pāli inscriptions dated from tenth century onward. The people of Haribhuñja(ya) were report to have abandoned their city because of the epidemic, cholera, to Sudhamma

Unluckily, most of modern scholars do not pay any attention to this precaution.

In Thailand, the inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng (1292 A.D.) of Sukhothai mentions the name Suvarṇabhūmi which can be identified with area around the Subanburi (Suvarṇapurī) province in Thailand.[51] And also inscriptions of Angkorian mandala mentions a name Suvarṇapura which has been identified with modern Subanburi (Suvarṇapura) in Central Thailand.[52] There are also inscriptions in which Sumatra is called Suvarṇabhūmi or Suvarṇadvīpa.[53]

To determine the exact location of Suvarṇabhūmi seems useless, since we have strong evidence that the name is used vaguely to denote a vast region lying to the East of India. However, scholars have tried to limit the area as follows:-

Lower Burma -- the area around the Matabun bay with Thaton or Sudhammavatī and Pegu or Hamsavatī as its centers;

Central Thailand -- the area around the Bight of Bangkok with Nakhon Pathom, and the area around Subanburi (Suvarṇapurī), U Thong (Cradle of Gold), Kañcanapurī as its centers;

Adding to this is the general idea that Suvarṇabhūmi is the whole Southeast Asia, or the area of Central Thailand and the Malay peninsula.

Let us first consider the case of Lower Burma. Majumdar is probably the first scholar who openly indicates that Suvarṇabhūmi is Lower Burma. He gives the reason as follows:-

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and Haṃsāvatī. The chronicle said that "because they speak the same language, therefore, they became acquainting very quickly," (ubbhinnaṃ bhāsā pi ekasadisaṃ eva vācikā pi na kiñci nānattaṃ honti, tasmā te sabbe khippaṃ vissāsikanti.) The language is understood here as Mon language. See *BEFEO*, XXV, (1925) p. 17.

[51] Coedès, (1924-29), p. 37.

[52] *IC*. IV: 64, K.774.

[53] Majumdar, (1927), p. 47.

> Ptolemy's Chryse Chersonese undoubtedly indicates the Malay peninsula, and his Chryse Chora must be the region north of it.
>
> Now we have definite evidence that a portion of Burma was known in later ages as Suvarṇabhūmi. According to the Kalyānī inscriptions (1476 A.D.), Rāmaññadesa was also called Suvaṇṇabhūmi, which would then comprise the maritime region between Cape Negrais and the mouth of Salwin.[54]

The identification of the two terms in Ptolemy is generally accepted as Majumdar describes. The area to the north of the Malay peninsula is Central Thailand not Lower Burma which lies to the West not the North of the peninsula.. We do not know why Majumdar equates Lower Burma to Suvarṇabhūmi. Epigraphical data used here are anachronistic, since not even an inscription from earlier period refers to Lower Burma as Suvarṇabhūmi. And all texts refers to this area as Rāmaññadesa, and not Suvarṇabhūmi. Had it been called Suvarṇabhūmi earlier, the name should have appeared or even preferred in these documents, since it would connect this area directly to the legend of Aśoka mission. Therefore, to use these sources, especially those of the Mon kingdom of Lower Burma, is risky, since they were written to prove that the Mon kingdom, to be exact Thaton, was Suvarṇabhūmi which the Aśokan mission converted to Buddhism. If this type of evidence can be used, Central Thailand in which the names of the towns still show their connection to the name Suvarṇabhūmi would be in a better position to be identified as Suvarṇabhūmi. Moreover, these data were not written to claim the primacy of being converted to Buddhism as those of Lower Burma. The area in Lower Burma is always called Rāmaññadesa, a Pāli name for Mon, the identifying of which to Suvarṇabhūmi appears only once in the Kalyānī inscription. The identification then would be quoted by the author of the Sāsanavamsa. And if this were to be taken seriously, the term 'Rāmaññadesa' is not a strictly geographical term but a cultural-geographical term as 'Kambujadesa.' In

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[54]Ibid., pp. 46-47.

this light, any place where Mon cultures predominate would be called 'Rāmaññadesa'; this has been the case for a chronicle written in Thailand to call the Central part of Thailand as 'Rāmaññadesa' when Mon culture was flourishing in the area, and later it was called 'Kambujadesa' when Khmer culture assumed the supremacy.[55]

Looking from the archaeological point of view, Lower Burma especially Thaton has yielded very poor data. And this has been an issue that perplexes scholars for a long time. The difficulty lies in that they have the preconceiveed idea that Suvarṇabhūmi was Lower Burma.[56] The oldest archaeological data of Indian civilization found in Southeast Asia are from the central part of Burma, Central and South of Thailand, and from the lower Mekong delta. These finds have been identified as of or belong to the same period Funan, the first mandala in Southeast Asia. If we

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[55]See *BEFEO*, XXV, (1925), p. 148.

[56]See for example Boisselier, the authority of Southeast Asian archaeology, who tried to explain the situation:

> Sona and Uttara are believed to have settled in the Mon country, some 50 kilometres to the north of Thaton; .... While it is not possible to link anything in the former capital of Rāmaññadesa with any of these traditions, it should be noted that the town was the major centre of Theravādin culture in lower Burma throughout the period from the fifth century to 1057, the date of its capture by Aniruddha. Yet the region of Thaton has yield no indication of the existence of local workshops or of images comparable in antiquity with the vestiges found on the site of the former Prome. This absence of any genuinely ancient evidence raises a problem that has been stressed by most authors. While we are unable to suggest possible explanation, we would at least emphasize that a bronze statue, undeniably in the Gupta style, is of very special interest. Beyond all doubt imported, it suggested that in the region where the Theravāda school was the most firmly established, iconography underwent a regeneration that is comparable to that observed in the Pyu country and due to the same influences: the newly introduced Gupta style seems at first to have existed side by side with the original school in the Andhra tradition, and then to have gradually ousted it. There is no doubt that such regeneration prepared the way for the adoption, at a date that cannot be determined but is certainly before the arrival of Aniruddha, of Pāla iconography, which in Burma was later commissioned into service by the Theravādin school, though it derives from the late Mahāyāna period of Indian Buddhism.

Boisselier's exposition is rather inadequate. First of all we did find some other images of antiquity in that area, but they were Brahmanical, and not Buddhist. Hence, the assertion that it was the center of Theravādin tradition since the fifth century onward seems to be incorrect. Another point is that no other example except for this single bronze Buddha was found. In view of this situation, we do not have anything to compare or to be said that it was the regeneration of the style in question. Furthermore, the Pāla style is not monopolized by the Mahāyāna schools. There must have been some Theravādin or other Hīnayāna schools in that period, since we found a votive tablet of that style with an inscription of the stanza "ye dharmā" in Pāli. Neither can one say that the Pāla style in Burma was limited to the use of the Theravāda school, since in Pagan we found murals painting depicting Avalokiteśvara and Tārā showing definitively the Pāla influence.

use, epigraphical and archaeological data, Suvarṇabhūmi, which was mentioned in the early texts, has to be identified with these areas, not with Lower Burma. Or if we really want it to be in Burma, Suvarṇabhūmi should be located in the Pyu mandala in the Central part of Burma where epigraphical and archaeological finds are proved to be of earlier date.

All these problems would be easily resolved if we accept, as all the texts suggest, that the term Suvarṇabhūmi is used vaguely to denote the region to the East of India. Instead of saying that Suvarṇabhūmi is Lower Burma or Central Thailand, we should say that Lower Burma and Central Thailand are in Suvarṇabhūmi. The word was used as a generic name for the area east of India. In the course of time when the authors had learnt more about the region, they then mention more specific name such as Yāvadvīpa, and start mentioning some other vague areas beyond that, such as Kārpuradvīpa.[57] But the term Suvarṇabhūmi remains unchanged when it was used in these later texts. This therefore supports the idea that Suvarṇabhūmi is a region not a nation. The term should not be used historically but geographically. It does not mean the Mon kingdom of Lower Burma which does not come into existence until the ninth or tenth century.[58]

The problem becomes more complicated when Pāli texts written in Sri Lanka mention Suvarṇabhūmi' s conversion to Buddhism by the mission sent by Emperor Aśoka. The identification of Suvarṇabhūmi thus involves a national pride of being the first Buddhist in Southeast Asia. But as we have shown above, the word

[57]Wheatley, (1961), pp. 177 ff.

[58]The Mon culture in the central and the lower northern parts of Thailand has been proved to be older than that of lower Burma. Luce, the authority in the Burmese studies, himself thinks that the Mons came into Burma from Thailand, see Luce, (1969), p. 26. He wrote "Mon-Khmer speakers have everywhere been pioneers in wet-rice -cultivation. As a result, they suffered from chronic over-population. They started apparently from Tonking, and spread over all the rice-plains of Further India and East India. Most of the Mons of Burma came originally from Siam.." If this is the case, Rāmaññadesa referred in the old texts would be in Thailand rather than in the southern part of Burma. Coedès has gone further to suggest that even Buddhism in lower Burma came from the Mon of the Dvāravatī culture, see Coedès, (1966), in *EOGHLUCE, AA*, Supplementum XXII, Volume I, pp. 112 ff.

'Suvarṇabhūmi' cannot be taken as a nation, but a region. It could have consisted of several areas and centers. Its extension or boundaries can be varied in the course of time.

Merchants as missionaries

That merchants, who, very probable, were mostly common merchants not learned ones, could not have been the vehicle of such high culture is obvious, but without merchants Southeast Asia would probably have had any chance to come in contact with the outside world at all. They might not have been the agent of introducing high culture such as Sanskrit literature, but they certainly gave this region the first contact to Indian civilization, especially with Buddhism.[59]

From Dharmaśāstras we have learnt that travelling abroad are forbidden to the Brahmins, the merchant caste thus is in a better position to go and seek wealth in the yonder lands. Examples are in abundance in the Jātaka stories and other sources. And it is an accepted fact that Buddhism and merchants are always in close relation. In canonical literature the converted are numerous among that caste. There are some instances that some merchants show their profound knowledge of the religion. In fact in Buddhism sometimes a layman can even teach monks concerning doctrinal point, the practice being evident in Fa Xian's record and actually still in practice nowadays in Thailand. This type of layman was then apotheosized in the person of Vimalakīrti. Of course, they were not all merchants, probably mostly Brahmins converted or born Brahmins, but in view of the evidence in the canonical works which mention names such as Cittagṛhapati etc., who obviously belong to the merchant community, to contend that there were learned merchants who could really teach the doctrine would

[59]There are, however, inscriptions left by some great merchants, revealing that they were not uneducated in terms of religions, since these inscriptions are mostly quotations from religious texts. See chapter 4 for detail discussion on this issue under the topic "Epigraphical data."

not be far from the fact.[60] We do have epigraphical data that go along with this idea as a merchant called Buddhagupta, Mahānāvika, left inscriptions of the Buddhist Creed, the Ye Dharma, and other verse quoted from a work which would normally be unknown to a layman.[61]

We also know that Buddhism is a missionary religion, and the mission does not have to be carried out by monks only.[62] Judging from the harsh circumstances and the knowledge required for high sea navigation, monks are not in the good position to go on a mission by their own, but have to rely on merchants for the facilities.[63] As we have found objects and inscriptions, or rather inscribed seals, from India which are unrelated to religions, we have to conclude that the real missions by monks should occur later.[64]

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[60]See *DPPN*, I: 865, Cittagṛhapati was declared by the Buddha to be pre-eminent among layman who preached the Doctrine. From this evidence we have to assume that there were numerous laymen who preached the Doctrine.

[61]See chapter 4 under the topic "Epigraphical data."

[62]The term "mission" is borrowed from the Christian tradition. Actually, in Buddhism it does not carry the same import as in Christianity. Missions in Buddhism were geared toward the spreading of the Good Dharma, and not so much in the effort to convert or prohibit people from what they practiced before embracing Buddhism. The characteristic of Buddhist mission is probably dictated by the perception of people toward religions in India and Southeast Asia. See Chapter 5 for the discussion. For general concept of 'mission' see *ER*, IX: 563-570. The article on 'Buddhist Mission' by Zürcher is too succinct on the diffusion of Buddhism to Southeast Asia, see *ER*, IX: 570-573.

[63]Even in the later period, Chinese pilgrims had to use the facility offered by these commercial vessels. See Wheatley, (1961), p. 38, where he translated passages from Fa-Hsien' record, describing the haphazard of the journey on the high sea: "...he took passage on board a large merchant-vessel, on which they were two hundred souls, and astern of which there was a smaller vessel in tow in case of accidents at sea and the destruction of the big vessel. Catching the fair wind, they sailed eastwards for two days; then they encountered a heavy gale, and the vessel sprang a leak. The merchants wished to get aboard the smaller vessel; but the man on the latter, fearing that they would be swamped by numbers, quickly cut the tow-rope in two. the merchants were terrified , for death was close at hand; and fearing that the vessel would fill, they promptly took what bulky goods there were and threw them into the sea. Fa-Hsien also took his pitcher and ewer, with whatever else he could spare, and threw them into the sea; but he was afraid that the merchants would throw over his books and his images, and accordingly fixed his whole thought on Kuan-Yin, the Hearer of Prayers, and put his life into the hand of the Catholic church of China, saying 'I have journeyed far on behalf of the Faith. O that by your awful power you would grant me a safe return from my wanderings'. ..... This sea is infested with pirates, to meet with whom is death. The expanse of the ocean is boundless, east and west are not distinguishable; only by observation of the sun, moon, and constellations is progress to be made......"

[64]Higham, (1989), pp. 251 ff. For detailed studies of these early artifacts, such as beads, seals etc., see Malleret, (1959-1963), especially Vol. III. For artifacts found in Thailand see Mayuree Veeraprasert, (1985) in *RCESEA*, pp. 168 ff. For inscriptions on seals see Kongkeaw Veeraprajak, (1985), these seals were found in the peninsular Thailand. Their dates ranges from 1st century A.D. onward. The content of the inscriptions is very short usually containing only one word. They appear to

What kind of Buddhism then did these merchants introduce to the region? We probably cannot expect every merchant to be Buddhagupta. Most of them probably belonged to the common stock. Their belief, even they were Buddhist, was very likely to be the same as the common belief in India at that time. In the early phase of Buddhism in India, local belief of gods and spirits was evident. It even made its ways to the canon as in Āṭānāṭiyasutta, Mahāsamayasutta of the Dīghanikāya.[65] They probably carried with them the images of Buddha or Ganeśa as the amulet to ward off danger.[66]

There are some recent studies on these amulets of merchants which mainly consist of standing Buddha identified as Dīpaṅkara Buddha, who, as some contend that his duty is to calm the wave, Gajalakshmi, a seated lady holding lotuses in two hands with elephants at her side, Kubera, God of wealth, and Ganeśa.[67] However, these objects can belong to other groups of people, such as pilgrims or missionary monks. The Standing Buddha can be any Buddha, not only Dīpaṅkara, and moreover, Dīpaṅkara has no connection with 'calming the waves', hence, does not have to relate to the mercantile group.[68] Gajalakshmi is not Lakṣmī, Goddess of wealth, but rather is the representation of the scene of the Birth of Buddha.[69] The only sound contender is Kubera who seems to belong to the community of merchants. And above all these

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have been used in business transactions, for we found words such as 'datavyam-to be given'; 'apralasanasya-not to be moved, or belong to Apralasana'. Later in the 6th century onward the content shows more of religious inclination, we found words such as 'surudharmasya'; 'śrammana.'

[65]The only studies on this subject is Masson's book titled *La Religion Populaire dans le Canon Bouddhique Pāli*, written in 1942. He had planned it in two volumes, but unfortunate for us, completed only the first one on the various gods and genies who appear in the Tripiṭaka. The second volume, planned to investigate the cults, sacrifices, divination, magic and other beliefs, remained unwritten.

[66]Phasook Indrawooth, (1985), in *RCESEA*, pp. 155-167.

[67]Ibid., for reference see bibliography of the article mentioned.

[68]This identification seems to have appeared in many books without any real reference to a text or a tradition. See for examples Wheatley, (1961), p. 189; Phasook Indrawooth, (1985), in *RCESEA*, pp. 155-167.

[69]Dhanit Yupho, (1974), p. 27.

objects were not Indian, but were created by local artists of Southeast Asia, except for one standing Buddha found in Celebes which as more or less agreed among scholars, is supposed to be of Indian origin.[70] Therefore, to described all standing Buddhas as Dīpaṅkara, Gajalakshmi as Goddess of wealth etc., found in Southeast Asia as amulets carried by Indian merchants seems to distort the real import of these objects. But this is not to say that merchants from India had never carried these objects. They might have done so and thus provided examples for local artists to make ones of their own.

Since these merchants came from all parts of India and belonged to Indian culture, that is to say they were born in Brahmanical or later on Hindu society, Buddhism that they introduced could be expected to have mixed character. This mixed character is already evident in India itself. We have inscriptions from Bharhut calling Buddha as Mahādeva and Pitāmaha, epithets belonging to Hindu gods, and not to Buddhism.[71] The effect of this character will remain and persist as prominent character of the Southeast Asian religion as a whole.

Trade also affects the structure of the distribution of Indian religions in Southeast Asia. We have evidence, which will be discussed in detail in the next two chapters, showing that Hīnayāna Buddhism seemed to have reached Southeast Asia first, and later on, beginning from the seventh century, Mahāyāna and Brahmanism. However, the effects of these creeds did not confine to the same area. Hīnayāna Buddhism was strong in the western zone of the mainland area, Mahāyāna and Brahmanism in the eastern zone and the maritime area. One of the reason was the changing of the trade route which started to shift from the coastal and sea-land route to sea route in the beginning of the seventh century. This happened at around the

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[70]There are many studies on this issue. See reference in Chapter 4 under the topic "Archaeological data."

[71]Sugimoto Takushū, (1984).

same time as Mahāyāna Buddhism was becoming active. And at around the same time the revival of Brahmanism. Therefore the areas which show strong influences of these two later creeds were the maritime area and the areas in the mainland such as the Chams and the Khmers which had close relation to the maritime cultures.[72]

Even if trade and merchants can be seen as the important agents in introducing and giving the structure of Indian religions in Southeast Asia, they were not the only factor. We do have evidence of monks, monasteries and texts which would require another sort of mediators, the missionaries. This aspect of the introduction has laid the foundation for the spread of Buddhism and the establishment of Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

Buddhist Mission to Southeast Asia

It is generally accepted that Buddhism is a missionary religion. This aspect of Buddhism has been an effective instrument in spreading the creed both inside and outside India. In fact Buddhism is the only Indian religion that can persist outside India. Even if Hinduism had spread to Southeast Asia at about the same time as Buddhism, it has never become the principal creed among the people. But this does not mean that Hinduism does not play any role in Southeast Asian religion. However, because of its nature, it cannot attain the status as Buddhism has. The success of the spread of Buddhism by missions also reveals the 'portable sanctity' aspect of Buddhism. Its sacredness is not bound by a territory as in the case of Hinduism which forbids the chief agent, the Brahmin, to go out of India.

Compared with Brahmanism or Hinduism, Buddhism as a religion is more flexible, since it is not limited by concept of caste. Above all anybody can become a Buddhist, but one has to be born into Hindu religion. In view of this fact, other people

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[72]For the contact between maritime Southeast Asia and the Chams of South Vietnam and the Khmer see Mabbett, (1986), pp. 296 ff.

outside of Indian society cannot really become Hindu. But this is not the case for Buddhism, one can becomes Buddhist, can be ordained as a monk, if he is so qualified as prescribed in the Vinaya rules. Thus Hinduism in Southeast Asia was always used in the religio-political sphere rather than a creed or belief for the masses. It has been absorbed into Buddhism which never denies features common to all Indian religions such as transmigration, Karma theory and cosmology. On the contrary Buddhism which assimilates and adapts itself according to indigenous beliefs, has never lost its character as Buddhism, because it has the institutionalized agent, that is the Sangha. The Sangha needs the support from both the masses and the noble. It does not divorce itself from the common people and simultaneously can influence the political world. Therefore, Buddhism changes and at the same time maintains its character as a religion.

This is possible only if that religion has a well organized community which will help preserve the original doctrine and confront with the change and new situation. It was the members of the community of monks who implanted and established the religion far and wide.

The missionary spirit of Buddhism becomes evident very early in its history. In the Vinayapiṭaka, Buddha sent his first group of disciples to spread the Dharma.[73] This probably is the first religious mission in the world. In Buddha's time Buddhism had already spread far beyond its cradle in Magadha as far as Avanti and Sunāparantapa.[74] This process of spreading the Dharma was probably even more intensified in the ensuing centuries, since by the third century B.C. Buddhism had already spread throughout India.[75]

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[73]V. I: 20-21. For references in the other sources see Lamotte, (1958), p. 325.

[74]Lamotte, (1958), pp. 325 ff.

[75]Ibid.

The Pāli sources of Sri Lanka attribute this conversion to the missions sent by Moggalītissa in the reign of Aśoka Maurya. There were nine missions listed in the Sri Lankan chronicles.[76] However, since our concern is mainly Southeast Asia, the eighth in the list, the mission to Suvarṇabhūmi which presumably to be Southeast Asia will be investigated here.

Aśoka's Mission, Historical or Mythical.

The word 'Suvarṇabhūmi' mentioned in connection with Buddhism, or to be exact, with the introduction of Buddhism into Southeast Asia is to be found not in Indian literature, but in Sri Lankan Pāli literature, the Dīpavamsa, Mahāvamsa and the Samantapāsādikā. The verse gives the following information:-

Dīpavamsa VII, 11.
Suvaṇṇabhūmiṃ gantvāna Soṇuttaro mahiddhiko
dametvā pisācagaṇe mocesi bandhanā bahū.

Mahāvamsa XII, 44-45
Saddhim Uttaratherena Soṇatthero mahiddhiko,
Suvaṇṇabhūmiṃ agamā, tasmin tu samaye pana.
jāte jāte rājagehe dārake ruddarakkhasī,
samuddato nikkhamitvā bhakkhayitvāna gacchati.

Samantapāsādikā I: 63-69
Suvaṇṇabhūmiṃ gantvāna Soṇuttarā mahiddhikā
pisāce niddhamitvāna brahmajālaṃ adesisuṃ.

The relation between these two verses are quite obvious. If we accept that the Dīpavamsa was composed before the Samantapāsādikā, the latter was quoted from the former. The verses appear in the account of the missions sent at the time of Aśoka after the third council. From them we learn that Sona and Uttara went to

[76]See Dīpavamsa VIII, 1-13; Mahāvamsa XII, 1-55; Samantapāsādikā I; 63-69. The detailed studies of these missions can be found in Lamotte, (1958), pp. 319 ff. He also provided the comparison among all the sources such as the Rock edicts of Aśoka, Mahākarmavibhanga and Nāgājunakonda inscriptions, see p. 329.

Suvarṇabhūmi, tamed the local people, called in the verses as demons and thereby helped them from the bondage. The Samantapāsādikā give further information that they preached Brahmajālasutta, the first sutta in the Dīghanikāya of the Pāli canon.

Another legend comes from Mahāvamsa with slightly different concept about the demons. Here at the capital of Suvarṇabhūmi, around the time when the two Theras arrived, whenever a child was born, a female rākṣasa from the ocean would come and eat them. As consequence, the Theras who must have reached Suvarṇabhūmi by sea route were mistaken to be friends of the demon, and were threatened to be killed by the people. They then explained their status and subjugated the demon. After that the Brahmajālasutta was preached to convert the people. The mission concluded with a great mass of people taking refuge in the three gems. Thousand of men and women were ordained.[77]

If this was a historical fact, we have to assume that either the Theras were well-versed in local language or the local people were well-versed in Pāli, since the Brahmajālasutta was supposed to be preached when they arrived. The fact that the sutta itself is a very philosophically difficult text unsuitable for the beginners makes the story even more incredible.[78] Moreover at that time the arrangement of the Tripiṭaka was not the same as what we now have, but all the sermons preached by these missionaries not just to Suvarṇabhūmi seem to have come out the Tripiṭaka as we now possess.[79]

The description in the Dīpavamsa and the Samantapāsādikā is probably more accurate in the point that the subjugation of demons was a mythologized version of indigenous people being subjugated. However, it is the conclusion of the mission in

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[77]See supra the previous footnote.

[78]A very thoroughly studies of this sūtra was made by Bhikkhu Bodhi, (1978). In that book he gave the translation of the sūtra together with the translation of its commentary and sub-commentary.

[79]Lamotte, (1958), p. 335.

the Mahāvamsa that rightly reflects the situation of the establishing of Buddhism. Being a religion that has the strict rules in administrating the Sangha, community of monks, and alternatively the application of these rules such as ordination ceremony requires the Sangha, the establishment of Buddhism therefore requires more than just two monks preaching around converting people. As Gombrich rightly observes:

> We must remember that in Buddhist estimation the Doctrine is only established where the Sangha is established, and, in turn, that is considered to be the case only when a monastic boundary has been duly established, for without such a boundary no formal act of the Sangha, whether prātimoksha or ordination ceremony, can take place. The establishment of a monastic boundary requires lay support: the land has to be given to the Sangha. Alternatively, Buddhism can be considered to have taken root somewhere only when a local recruit has been properly ordained there. These considerations would apply just as much to the spread of Buddhism within India as to its diffusion into foreign land.[80]

This being the case, if the Soṇa-Uttara mission were to complete the task of converting Suvarṇabhūmi, Suvarṇabhūmi would have to become Buddhist before the Theras arrived. The account tells us that they ordained a multitude of people after the sermon. The ordination ceremony, a formal act according to the Vinaya, requires not only the Sangha, a group of at least five monks fully ordained, but also a fully established monastery with the assembly space well-defined by a boundary set as prescribed in the Vinaya. Or otherwise we would have to assume that they were accompanied by other monks, and set the boundary right there just for that purpose.

We also have a story of the introduction of Buddhism to Suvarṇabhūmi in the Buddhist Sanskrit text. The Mahākarmavibhanga gives Gavampati as the author of the conversion.[81] This would push the conversion back to the Buddha's time. It is not

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[80]Bechert and Gombrich, (1984), p. 83.

[81]Mahākarmavibhanga, p. 62. Anavataptasarasaś ca kuṅkumam ānāya Kaśmīrāyām pratiṣṭhāpitam. tac cādyāpi lokapabhuktaṃ vihāraś ca kārito'dyāpi ca tatraiva prativasanti. yathā āryaGavāmpatinā Suvarṇabhūmyāṃ yojanśataṃ janapado'bhiprasāditaḥ. yathā ca Pūrvavidehā ārya-

improper that Gavampati's name is given, since he is the foremost among the disciples in teaching people of yonder lands.[82] And Gavampati is a popular figure in Southeast Asian Buddhism. Even if the list of missions given in this text consists of both actual and mythical places such as Pūrvavideha and Sri Lanka, it reflects the more accurate situation than the Pāli ones in the point that the mission or the spread of Buddhism has been carried on since the Buddha's time, and consequently progressed farther and farther beyond its original place.[83]

Since we have the Aśokan inscription on the issue, it is worth comparing it to the records in Dīpavamsa and Mahāvamsa. There are four inscriptions which have the story of Aśoka missionaries, most of their content and vocabulary are the same.[84] The part relating the missionary runs as follows:-

> In the opinion of the (king) the Beloved of gods, the most esteemed conquest is the Dharmavijaya (conquest of Dharma). And that conquest has achieved by (the king), the Beloved of gods, both here (in his own dominions) and among all the border (or neighboring) regions as far as six yojanas where dwells the Ionian (or Greek) king named Antiochos, and beyond that Antiochos (i.e., in the north-west) (where live) the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonos, Magas and Alexander and also downward (i.e., in the South) among the Cholas and Pandyas as far as the Tāmraparnī (river) people and thus also in the king's own provinces viz., in the countries of the Ionians and Kambojas, the Nābhapantis of Nābhaga, the Bhojas and the Pitinikas, the Andhras and the Pulindas. ..... Even where the envoys of the Beloved of gods, do not

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PiṇḍolaBhāradvājenābhiprasāditā... yathā cāryaMahendreṇa Siṃhaladvīpe Vibhīṣaṇaprabhṛtayo rākṣasāḥ samaye sthāpitā deśaś cābhiprasāditaḥ. ....

[82]For reference on Gavampati in the Pāli and Sanskrit sources see *DPPN*, I: 756-757. The Sāsanavamsa, also relates the story that the Buddha requested him to go to establish the teaching in Sudhammapura in the Rāmañña country. This shows that the story recorded in Mahākarmavibhanga was known to the author of the Sāsanavamsa in the nineteenth century. We might as well surmise that the story had probably existed in Burma long before the composing of the Sāsanavamsa.

[83]However, if one carefully scrutinize the account given in the Mahākarmavibhanga, one would find that it is rather mythical. In the account legendary locations have been named such as Anavatapta, Pūrvavideha. And surely Siṃhaladvīpa was taken to be the Lankādvīpa of the Rāmāyana, since Vibhīṣaṇa's name was given. See the previous footnote.

[84]Rock Edict XIII, found in Girnar (Junāgarh, Kathiawar), Kalsi (Dehra-Dun, U.P.), Shahbazgarhi (Peshwar, N.W.F.P. of Pakistan), Manshehra (Hazara, N.W.F.P. of Pakistan). See R. Basak, (1959), pp. 63 ff.:

go, they on hearing of the ordinances preached on the Dharma..... follow and will follow the Dharma.

In these inscriptions, it is not clear that Aśoka sent monks as missionaries to those places, the word used is simply 'Dūta'. And it is not clear that he sent these messengers to propagate Buddhism, since the word 'Dharma' in all the inscriptions is used to stand for the norms of conduct similar to all other Indian religions.[85] There is no evidence that these areas had been 'converted.' The purpose of sending these messengers was not to convert these kings and people to be Buddhist but to spread the idea of Conquest by Dharma.

On the geographical side, the areas to the North seem to have been mentioned in great details, the areas to the South rather sparingly. Moreover, scholars now generally agree that Tāmraparṇī is not Sri Lanka, but a river in Southern-Deccan.[86] We thus do not have any support for the Aśokan mission even to Sri Lanka, not to mention Suvarṇabhūmi, if it does mean Southeast Asia.

However, the story of the Buddhist mission must have had some truth in it, since not only the chronicles of Sri Lanka preserve the story, but it also appears, in a different form, in the Mahākarmavibhanga, a Buddhist Sanskrit work. Yet the identification of these place names remains problematic. The names "Suvarṇabhūmi" and "Simhala" appear in the list of the Mahākarmavibhanga. The Thera who went to Sri Lanka is Mahendra which agrees very well to the chronicles, but the Thera who went to Suvarṇabhūmi is Gavampati, and not Soṇa and Uttara. The order of the names, Suvarṇabhūmi before Siṃhala, in both Pāli and Sanskrit sources seems to

[85] The meaning of the word "dharma" used in the edicts of Aśoka has been long debated among scholars. Some take it to mean strictly the Buddhist Dharma, others, as Dharma in general. However, in these edicts where the word appears the context does not suggest that it has to be the Buddhist Dharma. See Basak, (1959), p. xxii who advocates that it means the Buddhist Dharma only, but see also Thapar, (1978), pp. 33 ff.

[86] See Basak, (1959), p. 73; B.C. Law, (1987), p. 62.

suggest that Suvarṇabhūmi here is not the oversea Suvarṇabhūmi, but Suvarṇagiri region as Law has suggested. The confusion does not originated in Sri Lanka but in Burma from which originates the effort to equate this Suvarṇabhūmi to the Mon kingdom,[87] since no source in Sri Lanka has ever interpreted Suvarṇabhūmi as Southeast Asia.

Nevertheless, judging from this evidence together with inscriptions in Brahmī scripts found in abundance in Sri Lanka, it is probable that Buddhism had reached there at around Aśokan period or not long after that. But whether it was because of the emperor's effort in sending a mission over to Sri Lanka or not, cannot be certified by other sources except for those written in Sri Lanka's own tradition. In fact the chronicles themselves credit the task to Moggalītissa Thera, the Patriarch who presided over the third council.[88] Thus these missions in the chronicles were probably not the same as those mentioned in the Aśoka inscriptions, and therefore have to be treated as the history of Buddhist church, not as general historical evidence.

As for Suvarṇabhūmi, we do not have any inscription that ancient nor archaeological data to support the claim that Aśoka mission referred to in the Sri Lankan chronicles had ever reached there. The tradition that these two Theras came to Burma and converted the people is not older than the fifteenth century and has never been found in other sources except in Burma.

Since the location of Suvarṇabhūmi mentioned in all the data cannot be located with indisputable certainty, and even if it has been identified to be Southeast Asia by modern scholars with the help of Classical and Arab data, the mission to Suvarṇabhūmi, assuming that it was Southeast Asia, in the Sri Lankan chronicles remains even more doubtful. As Gombrich's remark quoted above, to establish

[87]This happened rather late. The identification of "Suvarṇabhūmi" mentioned in connection with the Buddhist mission is in the famous Kalyānī inscription of the fifteenth century.

[88]Dīpavamsa, VIII: 1-13 ; Mahāvamsa, XII: 1; Samantapāsādikā, I: 37.

Buddhism requires the establishment of the Sangha, an act which cannot be done in a short period of time. It is probably more worthwhile to look at the introduction of Buddhism into Southeast Asia as a process involving many factors and dynamics. But this does not mean that the mission plays no part in the spreading of Buddhism into Southeast Asia. The mission forms a crucial factor in the introduction of Buddhism, and only by this way that Buddhism becomes firmly established in Southeast Asia.

The account of missions in Pāli source has a defect in oversimplifying the process of mission. It is inconceivable that the whole India would have been converted at the same time, some parts had been converted before while the Buddha was still alive, other parts would be converted in the course of time. Buddhist missions therefore have to be conceived as a continuous process carried on by the members of the Sangha. Consequently it is impossible to trace every step of these missions, except where evidence has remained intact, a situation rarely found, since most of them have been altered, reconstructed, because Buddhism in most cases is a living faith in the regions. We shall try to narrow down the period when Buddhism had been introduced to Southeast Asia with the help from other two factors, trade and pilgrimage, together with epigraphical and archaeological data afterward.

Trace of Buddhist Mission in Southeast Asia

Except for some references in the canonical works, there is hardly any record of Buddhist mission. Even in the Sri Lankan chronicles, mission was only dealt with in connection with the account of the third council, probably in order to assert the authenticity of the direct lineage of the Sri Lankan church, and not to describe the mission itself.

For the data found in Southeast Asia, there is no record of early missions. All the local data seem to have followed the account related in the two chronicles of Sri Lanka. But we also find numerous legends related the visits of the Buddha himself in

the area. This is probably the way to say that there were Buddhist monks travelling around preaching the Doctrine in Suvarṇabhūmi,[89] the situation which is probably more in accordance with the fact than those of the chronicles. However, since these legends and chronicles were written for the purpose of affiliating the Buddha to the localities, the authors probably did not have such concept as we interpreted in their mind. We shall have seek for other sources of information to use as evidence that there were monks, visiting the area from India and Sri Lanka. Later when the relation between Sri Lanka and Southeast Asian countries was intensified, there are some references to the Theras from Sri Lanka, but most of the time the accounts, with the exception of those relations between the kings concerning the religious matter, are absent from the Sri Lankan side.[90]

This is probably due to the nature of the missions which were carried on slowly by the community of monks themselves without any support from the state. It is quite normal that the record of these missions would not make their way into the official chronicles. At the period when the Theravāda Buddhism from Sri Lanka was ascending to the status of national religion, all the histories of Buddhist church written in Southeast Asia had to depend entirely on the Sri Lankan sources.

The only solid data on the missions come from Chinese sources.[91] It is evident that the sea route between India-Sri Lanka-Southeast Asia-China had been in use since the early part of the first century A.D., if not earlier.[92] The using of this route became more frequented due to the political unrest in Central Asia in the fifth

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[89] *ER*, II: 386.

[90] There are numerous works on this subject. Regretfully most of them are just the list and detail of each mission without mentioning its cause and effect on the situation of Buddhism in Sri Lanka or Southeast Asia. See for examples, Sirisena, (1978), Hazra, (1982).

[91] An excellent survey on Indian and Sri Lankan monks who went propagating the doctrine in Southeast Asia and the Far East was done by Pachow, (1958).

[92] Ibid., and also H. P. Ray, (1989), pp. 42 ff.

century.[93] There are records of missionary monks from India and Sri Lanka, going to or passing through Southeast Asia en route to China, and in some case after residing in China for sometime, they came back to Southeast Asia or back to India.[94] Moreover, in some cases the monks were in Southeast Asia and were asked to go to China to propagate the religion.[95] In another case a monk was in the service of a king as an ambassador to the Chinese court, carrying with him objects of worship and numerous scriptures.[96]

All these facts assure us of the presence of monks from India and Sri Lanka in Southeast Asia. They might have come to the region on their own accord to spread the Good Dharma, or might have been invited by the local Buddhists to teach and establish the community in the area. This bring us to another factor in the introduction of Buddhism into Southeast Asia, the pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage

If mission reveals Buddhism as having the quality of the portable sanctity, pilgrimage manifests the static side of the religion.[97] The origin of Buddhist pilgrimage has its root in its oldest literature, in the Mahāparinibbānasutta of the Dīghanikāya. In that sūtra the Buddha himself sanctified the four great sites, his birthplace, the place where he attained his enlightenment, where he preached the first sermon, and

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[93]Pachow, (1958), pp. 1 ff.

[94]Ibid., pp. 15 ff.

[95]Ibid., pp. 9 ff.; pp 13 ff.

[96]Coedès, (1968), p. 58.

[97]Private conversation with Professor L. Lancaster who is now writing a book on the 'portable' and 'fixed' aspects of religious sanctity. He suggests that sanctity in Buddhism is of the portable kind. It, thus, can cross over cultural boundary and spread easily to other lands yonder India. We, actually, can also perceive the concept of fixed sanctity in Buddhism. This paves the way for the development of pilgrimage. However, it should also be noted that these places such as the birth place of the Buddha, etc., were finally 'transferred' out of India by the Buddhist of other countries. They created or identified these sacred places in their own countries. Thus even they were 'fixed sanctities,' in Buddhism they were somehow 'portable.'

the place where he entered nirvana, as the places one should visit if one wishes to be associated with the memory of the Buddha. The merit of people who have visited the place is the attainment of happiness in the heaven.[98] As a result these four great sites became the most popular places for pilgrimage.

After the Buddha's nirvana, the relics were distributed among the princes of those days.[99] These relics had been redistributed in the time of Aśoka.[100] The relics are usually set in stūpas, a mound-shaped building. The four great sites together with the stūpas containing relics had become the centers for pilgrimages. They were consequently adorned with all objects of art such as ornate gate, bas-reliefs depicting especially the Jātaka scenes. Pilgrimage is the main factor in transfusing all these arts.[101] Other regions outside India also tried to acquire and possess their own relics, and imitate what they had seen in India. Therefore, later we also find centers of pilgrimage in Southeast Asia itself. These centers usually have legends surrounding their special relics. These legends thus can provide us with some insight in the attitude of the masses about the relics and the religion it self.[102]

Evidence about pilgrimage from Southeast Asia is not numerous in number, and the earliest is in the ninth century. A charter of Nālanda (c. 849 A.D.) recorded that a king, Bālaputradeva, of Suvarṇabhūmi, which in this case means the king from Sumatra, sent an ambassador to the court of the Pāla king Devapāladeva (c. 810-850)

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[98]D. II: 140-141.

[99]Ibid., II: 141-143.

[100]See Strong, (1983), pp. 109 ff.

[101]Ibid., p. 120. For detailed studies of Stūpa see Tucci, (1988); Snodgrass, (1985).

[102]Most of these legends remain untranslated. In Thailand they have been compiled under the title "Tamnān Phra That (Legend of the relics)." The genre has been briefly treated in Wyatt, (1976), pp. 116 ff. He calls them "Monumental" Tamnān which is more appropriate since they do not deal with just the relic but also of important images of Buddha. See also Kasetsiri, (1976), pp. 1 ff.

to propose the endowment for a monastery he had built at Nālanda.[103] We also have later inscriptions recording the building of Vihāras in Negapatam in South India.[104]

These records show that at that time the pilgrims, very likely monks more than laymen, must have been numerous that the monasteries had to be built for them. In this light we can assume that there had been numerous pilgrimages long before the establishment of these Vihāras. Actually, the building of Vihāras at the pilgrimage sites was in practice in those day as there is evidence that a king of Sri Lanka built monasteries for Sri Lankan monks at Bodhgayā and other places.[105] In case of Nālanda probably suggest the monks went there as students, and not just as pilgrims.

Deprived of data, we do not know what Southeast Asian pilgrims did in India. We have to assume that they also went around to the famous pilgrimage sites in Magadha, visiting all the holy places as the Chinese pilgrims who had gone to India for the prime purpose of seeking the holy texts, but still visited all these places. We had no record that Southeast Asian pilgrims had the same goal as the Chinese, but there is evidence that Funan, Sri Vijaya and other areas possessed a large amount of scriptural texts which might have been brought over by missionary monks as well as pilgrims.[106] Later when the contact between Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka was intensified the pilgrimages from Southeast Asian countries were recorded. They were mainly for gaining the correct and purified ordination.

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[103] *EI*, XVII: 322-4.

[104] Wheatley (1961), p. 203.

[105] Dohanian, (1977), pp. 16-17. The word he uses for describing the situation of Buddhism in Sri Lanka at the time is 'internationalism,' since monks from Sri Lanka kept close contact with India, and often travelled around to the pilgrimage places.

[106] For texts mentioned in connection with the missionary monks see Pachow, (1958), pp. 11, 13-14. For lists of Pāli works extent in Pyu tradition see Luce, (1974), pp. 125 ff. However, the list should not be taken strictly as Luce proposed, since the inscriptions from which the list derived from contain passages common to many sūtras. See also chapter 4 under the heading "Epigraphical Data."

As we have stated above that the introduction of Buddhism cannot be taken as something apart from the introduction of Indian culture as a whole, and since the process was progressing slowly and peacefully, it is likely the case that the presence of Buddhism had gone unnoticed. On the other hand since Buddhism is part of Indian civilization which was considered to be high cultures compared to the indigenous ones which did not possess writing system, Buddhist texts from India and Sri Lanka were seldom translated and also considered sacred or even magical in their original languages. This is probably why we do not have any data about the first introduction of Buddhism in Southeast Asia, except for the one in Sri Lankan Chronicles in which the name 'Suvarṇabhūmi' might have been wrongly appropriated to be Southeast Asia. We therefore have to be content with the approximate date gleaned from archaeological and epigraphical data.

Now we know that trade relation between India goes back to pre-historic period . In the early protohistoric time, there were evidences of trade between India and Southeast Asia especially on the metals such as tin, gold, spices as well as precious stones. However, these data are not really pertaining to Buddhism, except for an ivory comb found in Chansen in Central Thailand. This comb is dated to the first-second centuries A.D. and engraved on it is a pair of horses, a goose with an elaborately plume tail and a row of Buddhist symbols.[107]

The oldest substantial archaeological data pertaining to Buddhism are the Buddha images in the Amarāvatī style. The art of Amarāvatī flourished from the second to fourth century. The images were found in archaeological sites in Thailand, Vietnam, Sumatra, eastern Java, and Celebes.[108] However, only one of them, the one found in Celebes is of Indian origin, the rest are of mixed influences such as Gupta and

[107]Higham, (1989), p. 273.

[108]Wheatley, (1961), p. 189. For detailed references see chapter 4 under the heading "Archaeological Data."

Sri Lankan styles as well as strong local feature, and are dated not earlier than the fifth century.[109]

Scholars seem to overemphasize this later date and incline toward the late introduction of Buddhism. In fact, the evidence that these images bear different influences especially the local ones, and yet preserve the characteristic of the Amarāvatī art, shows that the contact must have occurred earlier. The first example must be that of Amarāvatī introduced either by merchants from India or merchants of Southeast Asia who went to India or even monks from India.

There is also another type of sculpture which yield us some light on the presence of Buddhism, the Dharmacakra, or the Wheel of Dharma. They are found mainly in the areas where the Dvāravatī culture predominated. The cult of Dharmacakra as the representation of the first sermon goes back to the days when the representation of the Buddha in human form was still considered inappropriate. In India we find this type of sculpture at Sañcī, the Dharmacakra was set on a column in the vicinity of the great stūpa. We do not find many of this type of Dharmacakra in India, but there are numerous bas-reliefs depicting the scene of the masses adorning the Dharmacakra set on the column. The tradition was flourishing through out the Amarāvatī period, but was not in evidence in the Gupta and the subsequent era. Therefore, in India the tradition seemed to have stopped at around the third and fourth centuries.[110]

Those which are found in the Dvāravatī mandala are numerous, and even if the style cannot be dated earlier than Gupta, the tradition goes back to the Mauryan period.[111] It has been noticed by scholars that the tradition once established outside

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[109]Dupont, (1949).

[110]See supra chapter 4 under the heading "Archaeological Data" for references. For the setting of the Wheel on a pillar see Irwin, (1973-1975).

[111]Irwin, (1973), pp. 709, 720, 738; Ito, (1977) in *IAHA*, II: 1227-1237.

the original place seems to have retained archaic features.[112] This probably is true in case of Dharmacakra cult, even the motive and style changed but the main concept was retained. These Dharmacakras therefore represent the old tradition implanted in the area no later than fourth century A.D.

For the architectural style, a close architectural resemblance has been traced between religious building in Beikthano of the Pyu mandala and those of Nāgārjunikonda.[113] There are also stūpas, large and small, found in Thailand which reveal close connection with the Amarāvatī style.[114]

As for epigraphical data, some small inscriptions in Brahmī and old Pallava scripts dated back to the first-third centuries A.D., have been found, engraved on clay or carnelian seals. However, these inscriptions do not shed much light on the introduction of Buddhism in the region. They are mainly for business transaction except for the two clay seals which inscribed 'Sangha Siri' with Brahmī script dated to the second century A.D.[115]

In the same manner as the Dharmacakras, the 'Buddhist creed, Ye Dharmā' inscriptions found all over the whole region are the continuation of the tradition in India which was popular from the first century onward.[116]

Therefore, in the light of archaeological and epigraphical data which are found in different regions throughout Southeast Asia, we may permit ourselves to conclude

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112 *Oriental Art: A Handbook of Styles and Forms*, (1980), pp. 161, 374.

113 Ibid., p. 133.

114 Department of Fine Arts, Thailand, (B.E. 2530 = A.D. 1987), p. 109. This is the most updated report on archaeological finds in Thailand. Unfortunately it was written in Thai. Nevertheless, Higham (1989) has incorporated most of the data. His books can be used as the most updated account on archaeological data in Thailand.

115 H. P. Ray, (1989), pp. 52 ff.

116 Lamotte, (1958), pp. 546-549. Shizutāni, (1965), No. 1699; (1968) I. (Gupta period) No. 48, 58, 74, 103, 107, 109, 118, 138, 139, 153, 159, 162, 170; (1970) II. (Pāla period), No. 14, 23, 28, 29, 31, 32, 35, 36, 38, 41, 43, 53 (?), 57, 59, 63, 70, 71, 74, 76-78, 93, 95, 96, 98, 100, 101, 104, 107, 108, 113, 115, 117, 124, 127, 131-134, 138, 140, 144, 145. See also Yuyama, (1971).

that around the first century or, to be more cautious, the second century, Buddhism had already been known to Southeast Asia. It was the effort of the merchants who induced the first contact and probably introduced popular Buddhism of India and Sri Lanka to Southeast Asia. A question might be asked here: granting that Buddhism was the faith of these merchants, would the people of Southeast Asia know that they were Buddhists, since it is unlikely that they would come and announce themselves as Buddhists to the people? The realization that this is Buddhism would not come until there is a presence of monks, and this is the principle function of the mission. These missionaries and the pilgrims provide the close connection to the original place and keep Buddhism in the region informed about the development in India and Sri Lanka.

The introduction of Buddhism thus should be seen not only as the introduction but the spread and the development of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. With the help of the three factors, trade, mission, and pilgrimage, Buddhism was introduced, reintroduced, spread, and developed throughout Southeast Asia from around the first-second centuries A.D. onward. All these three factors are essential to the character of Buddhism in Southeast Asia for centuries to come. Since it was introduced by merchants, it remains eclectic in nature. But with the missionaries operating at the same time, it does not lack learned or elite quality. Missions and pilgrimages which were facilitated by trade relations also provide Buddhism of Southeast Asia with the knowledge of Indian Buddhism. However, once Buddhism was firmly implanted these new waves of development were introduced and added without discarding the old tradition. Of course, Buddhism in different areas in Southeast Asia has also its own unique character due to different circumstances and development in places and time.

We cannot pinpoint a specific area in Southeast Asia which was first to receive Buddhism as their creed because of the nature of the trade and the route is varied to an extreme degree. However, since this is a process and the many areas can be exposed to the influence from India at the same time, the pinpointing of a specific area

seems to be inadequate. The same would be true for the areas whence Buddhism was introduced. It is likely that it could come from different areas of India as well as Sri Lanka. Archaeological and epigraphical data, however, indicate that South India and Sri Lanka are likely to be the place where Buddhism known and practiced in Southeast Asia originated.

All these factors help introduce and spread Buddhism in the region. But since their activities were scarcely recorded or well-dated, we cannot pinpoint the exact date or the era when Buddhism was introduced. In fact the importance of its introduction should be considered from the point of view of the people in Southeast Asia. The question is not when Buddhism was introduced, but rather when the people in Southeast Asia felt that this was Buddhism.

The next set of questions that would normally follow after this is about what kind of Buddhism and what the content of Buddhism in Southeast Asia was.

CHAPTER 4

STRUCTURE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN BUDDHISM UP TO THE 11TH CENTURY

Since it is impossible, due to the nature of data, to give a detailed account of events concerning Buddhism from its introduction into the region, the best approach seems to be to reconstruct its structure from epigraphical, archaeological data and other sources such as Chinese records and local legends. However, the picture reconstructed solely from data in Southeast Asia would be a distorted one, unless the local data are supplemented by those from India and Sri Lanka. For, as we have shown above, Buddhism in Southeast Asia was constantly exposed and thus susceptible to changes and developments coming from India and Sri Lanka.

The principle sources which we shall use in this chapter are mainly epigraphical and archaeological. Most of the inscriptions have not been available to scholars since they are published in Thai script and translated into Thai. These are inscriptions of Dvāravatī tradition. Those which are available such as inscriptions which belong to Pyu tradition found in Burma shall be incorporated so that we can see the total picture of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. As for archaeological data, new discoveries have been made and studies in the area where we do not have data before such as in Thailand. These also can provide us with a good amount of information on Buddhism and Indian religions in general.

In doing so, we hope to be able to see the content of Southeast Asian Buddhism from its beginning up to the eleventh century when Theravāda Buddhism is said to have become the dominant faith in mainland Southeast Asia. And from its

content, its original places, its pattern and development should become more discernible. We therefore shall begin this chapter with the survey of our sources and then proceed to derive from them the situation of Southeast Asian Buddhism and its place in the religious structure of Southeast Asia.

Epigraphical data

Most inscriptions found in Southeast Asia are religious in their character, a situation much regretted by historians who wish to have more data on historical events. However, due to their lack of dates and other information such as personal names and names of schools, these inscriptions do not yield accurate data for studying history of Buddhism either. We have passages quoted from the canonical works in inscriptions, most of which however are common to all sects. Nevertheless, they are in different languages which, not without problems, somehow can help us to identify the sects or schools to which they belong. But the situation is not so simple such that Pāli inscriptions would have to be ascribed to the Theravāda tradition, and Sanskrit ones, the Sarvāsitivada, or the Mahāyāna tradition.

Inscriptions other than 'quotation inscriptions' are mostly 'eulogy inscriptions' which mainly serve as a preface to 'donation inscriptions' or 'royal inscriptions'. These two types of inscriptions are records of the king's political or meritorious deeds. The 'eulogy inscriptions' and the 'royal inscriptions' can be found written both in Pāli and Sanskrit. The 'donation inscriptions' belonging to people other than the royalty or nobility are not numerous in number. Almost all of them are found in the Dvāravatī tradition, and are written in vernacular tongue.

We therefore have three categories of inscriptions in terms of languages: Pāli, Sanskrit and local languages, and four in terms of subject matters: 'quotation,' 'eulogy,' 'royal' and 'donation' inscription. These categories should be considered as a provisional system for the sake of researches, for there is no real distinction among

them. Quotations from texts can also be used as eulogizing stanza prefacing a royal inscription, thus, in this case we would have all three categories of content in the same inscription.

These inscriptions are paleographically dated from the fifth century up to the eleventh century. The scripts are in form close to those of the so-called 'Pallava' scripts but sometimes resemble the 'Pallava' scripts used in Sri Lanka.[1] In the course of time, from around the eighth and ninth centuries A.D., the so-called 'Pallava' scripts had evolved into local scripts which would show more and more regional characteristics of different areas of Southeast Asia.[2] Pre-Devanāgarī and Devanāgarī scripts were also used but not so popular as the southern Indian script.[3]

We shall treat all of them as a whole, since, though the scripts change, their content seems to remain in the same tradition; the quotation inscriptions quote more or less the same passages for some centuries. However, this does not mean that

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[1]For detailed study on the "Pallava" influence in Southeast Asian scripts see Chhabra, (1965). Some of Chhabra's assertions are criticized by de Casparis, (1979) in *ESEA*. He explains what is meant by the term "Pallava script in Southeast Asia" (pp. 382-385) as follows:

> Apart from the Oc-Eo and Vo-canh inscriptions the other epigraphic texts in South East Asia before the middle of the eighth century are written in a script called 'Pallava' on account of its general similarity with the script used in the inscriptions of the Pallavas of Kañcī. The name 'Pallava' has generally been applied to the scripts of these South East Asian inscriptions since Vogel's masterly study of the Kutai inscriptions published in 1918. The use of the term have been strengthened by an important study by B. Ch. Chabra, *Expansion of Indo-Aryan Culture during Pallava Rule.*
> It has to be admitted that there is little *direct* evidence linking the Pallavas with early inscriptions of South East Asia....
> ..It is curious that some of the most striking similarities between South And South East Asian 'Pallava' are with some inscriptions in 'Pallava' script in Ceylon.

Other scripts such as Brāhmī are also found in Southeast Asia, datable as early as the first century A.D. But they are usually inscribed on small seals, and thus do not yield much information. French scholars seem reluctant to use the term 'Pallava script.' In studying Khmer inscriptions the early inscriptions are usually called 'pré-angkorienne.' For a comparison chart of the 'Pallava' scripts and 'Pallava' script of the inscriptions found in Thailand see *IT*. I, and also an article by Kanika Wimonkasem in *PSFT*, pp. 166 ff. For early script used in Burma see *The Pyu Reader* (in Burmese) by U Tha Myat. For the 'Pallava' script of Sri Lanka see *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, voi. V, plate 15.

[2]de Casparis, (1972), pp. 387 ff. For chart of these scripts see the previous footnote, and also Dani, (1963).

[3]See de Casparis, (1950, 1956).

there is no development in the selection or the presentation of the quotations. The latter involves object of arts on which the quotations are inscribed. Hence, there is no real distinction between these two sets of data.

For the sake of presentation, the problems concerning languages, palaeography and the relations between epigraphical and archaeological data will be set aside for the time being. And again even if they are not clearly distinguishable by means of the categorization in terms of subject matters, for the sake of convenience, we shall have to adopt it as a method of presenting our data.

Quotation Inscriptions

The inscriptions which will be treated in this category are those which have their content quoted from texts, both canonical and extra-canonical. We find them in both Pāli and Sanskrit, but the their provenances are different. 'Quotation inscriptions' in Pāli are mostly found in the areas where the Pyu and Dvāravatī mandalas dominate,[4] 'quotation inscriptions' in Sanskrit, in the areas where the Śrī Vijaya mandalas and the mandala of central Java.[5] However, this does not mean that there is no Sanskrit inscription found in the areas where Pāli inscriptions are found.

Palaeographically, Pāli inscriptions of the Pyu and Dvāravatī traditions range from the fifth century onward.[6] Sanskrit inscriptions found in the peninsula and the archipelago are also of the early date as the Pāli ones, but those found in the Pyu

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[4]Reports on short inscriptions such as the 'ye dharmā' stanza can be found in *ARASI, ARASB*. Unfortunately they are scarcely published in facsimile form. Therefore are not available to study palaeographically. The only source which we have is the *Pyu Reader* mentioned in footnote 1 of this chapter. But again they are available in form of tracing by hand, and their provenence are not given. See also N. Ray, (1946). Those found in Thailand are published in *IT*, I with passable photographs.

[5]See *JBASMB*, especially Vol. XVIII (Feb. 1940), "Archaeological Researches on Ancient Indian Colonization in Malaya, pp. 8, 23. And also see Chhabra, (1965), de Casparis, (1950, 1956).

[6]The goldplate inscriptions found in Maunggan is dated by Finot, (1912), at around fifth century A.D. The ones found in Thailand are dated by comparison with those found in Burma at around the same time. In both traditions, Pyu and Dvāravatī, these type of inscriptions continue up to the tenth or eleventh century. See *IT*, I:12 ff.

mandala are from around the seventh century.[7] The 'quotation inscription' in Sanskrit has never been found in the Dvāravatī mandala.[8] In the Khmer mandala, the 'quotation inscriptions' in Pāli are of later date, and none in Sanskrit has been found.[9] However, those which are composed in Sanskrit are numerous, but they are not quotations from a text. The inscriptions are found inscribed on stone, metal plate as gold or copper, on stūpas, on the base of Buddha images, on the wall of caves.[10]

Quotations from canonical texts

Inscriptions of this kind some contain material drawn from the canonical texts usually a short stanza that sums up the doctrine. Some make and excerpt and arrange them in accordance with the shape of the material inscribed on such as the case of the inscription on Dharmacakra. However, sometimes it appears in the inscriptions a stanza which may be drawn from other texts.

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[7]See N. Ray, (1936), pp. 19 ff. These are inscriptions at the pedestal of a Buddha image found in Old Prome, and the 'ye dharmā' stanza also inscribed on the pesestal of a Buddha. They all are dated from seventh century onward. The first one is bilingual, unfortunately it gives no information on such as name of school. The 'ye dharmā' is such a common asset for all Buddhist schools that we cannot pinpoint it to any school.

[8]Only two Sanskrit inscriptions found in the Dvāravatī area of Central Thailand are an inscribed copper plate and a lithic. The content of the first is concerning the story of a king and his donation to a sanctuary of Śiva. See Department of Fine Arts (B.E. 2509 = A.D. 1966), pp. 21-25. The second is badly damaged, only two words can be read, and thus yield no meaning. See. *IT*, I:129-131. And also found are two seals inscribed "śridvāravatīśvarapuṇya." See *IT*, I: 95-97, 126-128.

[9]See K. Bhattacharya (1961), p. 17. This is an inscription on the back of a Buddha. It reads 'ye dhammā *hetuprabhavā* tesaṃ hetuṃ tathāgato avaca/ tesañ ca yo nirodho evaṃvādī mahasamano// (the italics are mine.)

[10]I have learned some time ago (1982) that Professor Claude Jacques has planned to study these 'ye dharmā' inscriptions. But since then I have not heard that he has published anything on the subject.

I. The 'ye dhammā/ ye dharmā' inscription

This is the most common type of the quotation inscriptions. The stanza can be found in the Mahāvagga, Vinayapiṭaka for the Pāli canon and from the Mahāvastu for the Sanskrit version as follow:

ye dhammā hetuppabhavā
yesaṃ hetuṃ tathāgato āha
tesañ ca yo nirodho
evaṃvādī mahāsamaṇo ti.

The reading of the Pāli inscriptions mostly agrees with the text except for the word 'tesaṃ', sometimes inscribed as 'yesaṃ.' The Sanskrit version is slightly different from the Mahāvastu; it may be from another version which is now lost.[11] The Sanskrit versions found in Southeast Asia are as follow:-

ye dharmmāḥ hetuprabhavāḥ
hetun teṣan tathāgato hyavadat
teṣañca yo nirodho hy– (yo nirodha evaṃvādī/ yo nirodho evaṃvādī)
evaṃvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ.

We have the third type which are mostly in Pāli, with one or two words in Sanskrit. They cannot be considered as Buddhist Sanskrit, but they can be a scribal slip caused by familiarity with Sanskrit. The one found in Cambodia, palaeographically dated in the seventh century, has the Pāli word "hetuppabhavā" in Sanskrit "hetuprabhavā." But the declension and the euphonic rules are according to the Pāli grammar.[12] In another one found in India in Sārnāth, dated in the second century, The Pāli form of "hetuppabhavā" and "mahāsamaṇo" are insribed in Sanskrit form

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[11]See details and references on this stanza in Lamotte, (1958), pp. 547 ff. For this type of inscriptions found in Yunnan see W. Liebenthal, (1947, 1955). The stanza can also be found at the end of each chapter of a Mahāyānasūtra or a Tantric text such as the Ratnagunasamccayagātha, and the Pañcakrama, see Yuyama, (1976). Those found in India see Shizutani, (1976), and also Yuyama, (1971).

[12]See K. Bhattarcharya, (1961), p. 17.

"hetuprabhavā" and "mahāśramaṇo".[13] In this case too the declension remains Pāli throughout.

The areas where we find this type of inscriptions in abundance are the Pyu and the Dvāravatī mandalas. In the former, we find also the Sanskrit version, but in the latter, the Sanskrit version has not been found except in some votive tablets which could have been introduced from other areas. There are however other inscriptions in Sanskrit in the Dvāravatī tradition, but they are not Buddhist in nature.[14] The Sanskrit version of these inscriptions is also found in West Borneo[15] and in the inscription on the gold plates found in a stūpa in Central Java.[16] In the latter cases it was found inscribed with some other stanzas as follow:-

i. A.
1. ājñānāc=cīyate karma janmanaḥ karma kāraṇaṃ
2. jñānā<n>na cīyate karma karmmābhāvān=na jāyate
3. ye dharmmā hetuprabhavāḥ hetun=teṣām
4. tathāgato avadat teṣāñ=ca yo
i. B.
1. nirodha <e>vaṃvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ kuśalaṃ
2. sarvapāpasya (ā?) kāraṇaṃ kuśalasyopasaṃ-
3. padā //

j. A.
1. ajñānāc=cīyate karmma janmanaḥ karma kāraṇaḥ jñānān=na
2. [c]cīyate karmma karmmābhāvān na jāya(n)te//
j. B.
1. ye dharmmā hetuprabhavā hetun=teṣāṃ tathāgata uvāca
teṣāñ=ca yo niro-
2. dha evamvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ// rūpiṇas=sarvvasattvā hi sarvva santi nirātmakāḥ
3. sarvve bhadraṃ vipaśyanti mā kaścit=pāpam=āgamam//

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[13]See *ARASI*, 1908, p. 74. Interestingly it is found among other inscriptions mentioning the name "Sarvastivādin."

[14]See supra. footnote 8 of this chapter.

[15]Chhabra, (1965), pp. 23, 54 and also *JRASMB*, 1940, p. 7. The dating of the inscriptions fourth century may be a little bit too early.

[16]de Casparis, (1956), p. 123.

Apart from these gold plate inscriptions four inscriptions of the first stanza are found in West Borneo together with the "ye dharmā" in Sanskrit.[17] It also appears in the inscription of the Buddhagupta Mahānāvika.[18] The stanza cannot be traced to any known text. However, since it always appears with other quotations, we assume that it is a quotation from some unknown text.

The incomplete stanza beginning with 'sarvvapāpasya etc.', is no doubt the famous Ovādapaṭimokkha stanza.[19]

Another interesting point here is that in the same set of inscriptions we have variant readings of the 'ye dharmā' and 'ājñānāc= cīyate'. The variant readings do not seem to be due to a scribal error, since in the case of the switching from "avadat" to "uvāca", the person who ordered it to be inscribed had a good knowledge of Sanskrit.

In the Pyu and the Dvāravatī traditions the inscriptions are inscribed in bricks, stone, gold and copper plates and votive tablets. The inscribed bricks are in some cases used for building a stūpa. Other inscribed objects are usually installed within the stūpas.[20] We also find the stanza inscribed directly on the sides of the small stūpas.[21] Occasionally the stanza is found with other stanza or quotations in the same inscription. Gold plates discovered at Maunggan, have the stanza incised at the beginning of each plate.[22]

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[17]Chhabra, (1965), pp. 54-55.

[18]Ibid., pp. 22-23.

[19]DN, II:49; Dhammapada, v. 183 etc.

[20]H.R.H. Prince Damrong Rachanuphap, (1973), p. 10.

[21]*IT*, I: 79-82.

[22]See *EI*, V, p. 101 ff.; Finot, (1912), pp.121 ff.; N. Ray, (1946), pp. 33-34.

We may consider these inscription as Dharmacetiya which is a kind of cetiya apart from the Dhātucetiya (relic cetiya) and Upabhogacetiya (things which are used by Buddha).[23] It is clear that inscriptions of this kind are considered sacred things containing the sum total of the doctrine. Though we cannot speculate or anticipate that all people who patronized these inscriptions were able to read Pāli, we can at least say that they knew the essential meaning of this stanza.

So far as the context shows the tradition seems to have close connection with the stūpa and the relics cult. We shall return to this point later.

II. The 'Paṭiccasamuppāda' inscriptions

This is the Paṭiccasamuppāda formula which can be found in the Tripiṭaka. The one found in Hmawza in the middle Irrawadi river in Burma is inscribed on a goldplate.[24] The text runs as follows:-

avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇa..etc.

Those which are found in Dvāravatī tradition are inscribed on the Wheel of Law. Since the Wheels on which we find this text inscribed are broken in parts, we do not have the complete text as from the one in Burma. However from the remaining part, there is one which probably agrees to the one in Burma.[25]

The Sanskrit version is found in Java dated around seventh to eighth century A.D. It is a long text with the commentary in which the inscription calls Vibhaṅga.

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[23]H.R.H. Prince Damrong Rachanuphap, (1973), pp. 9-10.

[24]N. Ray, pp. 37 ff. I cannot find Ray's citation from *ARASB*, 1938-1939, at around this time this branch of Archaeological Survey had already stopped issuing the report.

[25]*IT*, I: 111.

De Casparis has studied this in detail in the Prasasti Indonesia II.[26] He declares the text to be that of the Sarvāstivādin. However, the commentary itself does not show any particular tenet of the Sarvāstivādin such as the 'avijñaptirūpa, viprayukta-saṃskāra' when it glosses the terms rūpa and saṃskāra. More data are yet to be found before we can make any conclusion on this issue.

III. The 'Ariyasacca' inscription

The second group of this type is the essential part of the Dhamma-cakkappavattanasutta which contains the exposition of the Four Noble Truths and the knowledge of these Truths. The subject sometimes is found together with the 'ye dhammā' such as the case of an inscription from Si Thep which begins with the 'ye dhammā,' followed by a stanza on Ariyasacca and an excerpt from the Udāna and the Dhammapada. We have also the unique example of this text being inscribed on a Wheel of Dharma (c. 7–8th)[27] in the following manner:-

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[26]De Casparis, (1956), pp. 47-167, especially pp. 68-69. His judgement is mainly built on the fact that "tṛṣṇā" in the Vibhanga part of the text in the inscription is divided into three kinds, to viz., kāma, bhava and vibhava. This he thinks is the division particular to the Sarvāstivādins. Whereas the Pāli canon would divide "tṛṣṇā" in relation to the six classes of sense objects (visual, audible, etc.). The Nālandā inscription of this Pratītyasamutpāda with the Vibhanga represents another tradition, supposedly Mahāyāna. In this latter, "tṛṣṇā" is divided according to the Three Realms (kāma, rūpa, ārūpya). And on the account that this inscription found in Java has no real connection to Mahāyāna, but written in Sanskrit, he concludes that "Among the Hīnayāna schools writing in Sanskrit, the Sarvāstivādins were the only ones known to have possessed a real canon; in addition, they were the only ones known to have developed missionary activity outside India and it is evident that the presence of our text in Indonesia is to be attributed to such an activity. Since our Vibhanga version shows no Mahāyāna influence and, in addition, is written in correct Sanskrit, there is another argument in favour of a direct connection between our Vibhanga and the Sarvāstivādins School of Buddhism. (pp. 69-70). However, the division into kāma, bhava, vibhava is also quite common in Pāli canon too, at least in the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta, and thus is not peculiar to the Sarvāstivādins. But his argument from the language used being Sanskrit carries some weight. However, we cannot agree with him that only the Sarvāstivādins possessed a real canon, and other Hīnayāna schools using Sanskrit did not possess any. We do not have enough data to make such a conclusion. We also need more evidence before we can conclude that only the Sarvāstivādins were the only ones among Sanskrit Hīnayāna schools that had the missionary activities. That this inscription shows no sign of Mahāyāna, and thus is not Mahāyānistic can also be applied in the case of de Casparis' conclusion, since it does not have any doctrine particular to the Sarvāstivādins either.

[27]See Coedès, (1956), pp. 221-226; Boisselier, (Jul 1961- Jun 1962), pp. 225-231.

Inscriptions on the outer rim of the Wheel

I, IV, IX, XII	saccañāṇaṃ
II, V, VII, X, XIII	kiccañāṇaṃ
III, VI, (VIII), XI, XIV	katañāṇaṃ

Inscriptions on the spokes

1. dukkhasaccaṃ
2. dukkhasaccaṃ pariññeyyaṃ
3. dukkhasaccaṃ pariññātaṃ
4. samudayasaccaṃ
5. samudayasaccaṃ pahātavvaṃ
6. samudayasaccaṃ pahīnaṃ
7. nirodhasaccaṃ
8. nirodhasaccaṃ sacchikātavvaṃ
9. nirodhasaccaṃ sacchikataṃ
10. maggasaccaṃ
11. maggasaccaṃ bhāvetavvaṃ
12. maggasaccaṃ bhāvitaṃ

13-14. niyyānikahetudassanādhipatteyyabhāvena maggasacce

15. niyyādhikahetudassanādhipatteyabhāvena maggasacce

Inscriptions on the middle ring

a. tiparivattaṃ. b. dvādasākāram. c. dhammacakkaṃ
d. pavattitaṃ e. bhagavatā.

Inscriptions on the inner ring

A. saccakiccakatañānaṃ B. catudhā catudhā kataṃ
C. tivattaṃ dvādasākāram D. dhammacakkaṃ mahesino.

The particular point about this inscription is that the text is not an actual excerpt from the canon. Such an account of the Four Noble Truths with their corresponding knowledge can be found in the Mahāvagga, Vinayapiṭaka and the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta. In the inscription, the relation is shown by setting the knowledge on the outer rim against the Four Noble Truths which are on the spokes. However, added to these Truths, the inscription has the information of the duties on each Truth, which is to be found in the text such as the Paṭisambidāmagga, and the

Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosa as well as in its commentary by Dhammapāla. The latter two were written in the fifth century.[28]

The last portion of the inscription is a summarizing stanza of the Four Noble Truths and their knowledge which sometimes is found inscribed singly or with other quotations. The origin of the stanza cannot be traced but it is quoted in Sāratthasamuccaya, and the Paṭhamasambodhikathā, but these are definitely written later than the inscription.[29] So far we can only say that these works quote from the same source now lost. The stanza in inscription form is found only in the Dvāravatī culture and has a close relation with the cult of Dharmacakra.

There is another inscribed Wheel, however, only two spokes survive. The inscription runs:-

-----udapādi vijjā uda(pādi)[30]

This is the later part of the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta. The arrangement of the text must be different from the complete one mentioned above. Nevertheless, it appears to belong to the same tradition: the Four Noble Truths and the Wheel of Law.

IV. Udāna, Suttanipāta and Dharmapada

The quotations from these two texts are found with the ye dhammā stanza which serves as a preface. They are found only in the Dvāravatī tradition. The one which is palaeographically dated in 6th century consisting of the "ye dhammā," the

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[28]For reference on these works see Coedès, (1956).

[29]Sāratthasamuccaya is published in Hewavitarne Bequest Series (Colombo), vol. XXVII. It is a commentary on the Catubhāṇavāra, a compilation of twenty-seven extracts from the Nikāyas, mainly from the Khuddhakapāṭha. We have no information for the date of these two works. See *DPPN*, I: 842 and II: 1107. For Paṭhamasambhodhikathā, see Coedès, (1968).

[30]*IT*, I:125.

summarizing stanza of the Four Noble Truths, stanzas from the Udāna, and the Dharmapada[31] as follows:

The ye dhammā
The summarizing stanza
From the Udāna
yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā
ātāpino jhāyato brahmanassa
athassa kankhā vapayanti sabbā
yato pajānāti sahetudhammam
yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā
ātāpino jhāyato brahmanassa
athassa kankhā vapayanti sabbā
yato khanaṃ paccayanaṃ avedi
yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā
ātāpino jhāyato brahmanassa
vidhūpanaṃ titthati mārasenaṃ
suro va obhāsanaṃ antalikkhanti
From the Dharmapada
anekajātisamsāraṃ
gahakāraṃ gavesanto
gahakāraka diṭṭho'si
sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā
visaṅkhāragataṃ cittaṃ
sandhāvisam anibbisaṃ
dukkhājāti punappunaṃ
punagehaṃ na kāhasi
gahakūṭaṃ visaṅkhataṃ
taṇhāṇaṃ khanam ajjhagā ti

Another inscription dated one or two centuries later has only two stanzas quoted from the Suttanipāta and the Udāna,[32]

Suttanipāta, verse 558.
abhiññeyyaṃ abhiññātaṃ
pahātabbam pahīnaṃ me
bhāve(tabbañ ca bhāvitaṃ)
tasmā buddho' smi brāhmana.

Udāna
yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā
ātāpino jhāyato brahmanassa
athassa kankhā vapayanti sabbā
yato pajānāti sahetudhammam.

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[31]Udāna, I. 1, 2, 3.; Dhammapada, verses 153-154; *IT*, I: 116-122.

[32]*IT*, I: 237-240.

The inscription is badly damaged; it might have the following stanza from the Udāna as the previous one.

The first one is inscribed on octagonal lithic and the quotations are from four different texts. This probably is intentionally done, since number eight is the Eightfold Noble Path and number four is the Four Noble Truth. Most of the monolithic inscriptions in the Dvāravatī tradition are on the octagonal stone.

V. Gold plate inscriptions of Hmawza and Maunggan

This is a set of goldplates inscribed with excerpts which can be traced to several passages in the Pāli Tripiṭaka found at Hmawza of the Pyu tradition. But they do not exactly correspond with those passages in the Tripiṭaka, except for the Pratītyasamutpāda formula and a passage from the Paṭisambidāmagga. The excerpts are varied in their content. There is a passage relating the story of the Buddha going into Rājagṛha with the three Jaṭila:-

> Siddhaṃ danto dantehi sahapuraṇajaṭilehi (sic) vippamuttehi
> siṃginikasavaṇṇo rājagahaṃ pavasi bhagavā. mutto muttehi
> sahapurāṇajaṭilehi siginikasavaṇṇo (sic) rājagahaṃ pavasi bhagavā.
> tiṇṇo tiṇṇehi sahapurāṇajaṭilehi vippamuttehi siginikavaṇṇo (sic)
> rājagahaṃ pavisi bhagavā. dasabale dasav[ā]so dasadhammacupeto
> so dasasata[ṃ] parivāro rājagahaṃ pavasi bhagavā.

The episode can be traced to the Mahāvagga, Vinayapiṭaka, and also to the Nidānakathā of the Jātaka commentary.[33]

[33] V. I: 38; JA. I: 84. There are some minor differences between the text in the inscription and the text of the Pali text Society. Some of them such as 'pavasi, siginikasavaṇṇo' are probably scribal errors The latter runs as follows: (words in italic show the ones that are different from the text in the inscription.)

> danto dantehi saha purāṇajaṭilehi *vippamutto* vippamuttehi *siṅginikkhasuvaṇṇo*
> rājagahaṃ *pāvasi* bhagavā.
> mutto muttehi saha purāṇajaṭilehi *vippamutto vippamuttehi siṅginikkhasuvaṇṇo*
> rājagahaṃ *pāvasi* bhagavā.
> tiṇṇo tiṇṇehi saha purāṇajaṭilehi *vippamutto* vippamuttehi *siṅginikkhasuvaṇṇo*
> rājagahaṃ *pāvasi* bhagavā.
> *dasavāso dasabalo dasadhammavidū dasabhi c'*upeto
> so dasasataparivāro rājagahaṃ *pāvasi* bhagavā.

Some of them are from the Suttantapiṭaka. But the passages which are list of Dharma appear in several suttas, therefore, we cannot identify them with a specific sutta. For example, the passage on the Tathāgata's Vesārajjañāṇa beginning with 'cattārimāni bhikkhave tathāgatassa vesārajjāni yehi vesārajjehi samannāgato tathāgato ābhāsanthānaṃ paṭijānāti parisāsu sihanādaṃ nadati', etc., can be found, not word by word, in the Mahāsīhanāsutta and the Catukkanipāta of the Anguttaranikāya. The same situation holds for the list of the Bodhyaṅga which can be found in several places.[34]

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[34]Luce, (1972), assigns these excerpts to a specific text. Though this is not really acceptable since they appear in several places, but his lists of texts help us create the picture of the Tripiṭaka in the Pyu time. The list is as follows: (added notes in [..] are my own).

1. Vinaya, Mahāvagga I, 23. The Buddhist Creed, ye dharmā hetuprabhavā, etc. the stanza spoken by Assaji, which led to the conversion of Gotama's chief disciples, Sāriputta and Moggalana. It is engraved in Pāli on both the Maunggan gold plates, found seven miles south of Śrī Kṣetra and now at the British museum. Edited by U Tun Nyein at Epigraphia Indica, Vol. V, 1896-99, No. 11, pp. 101-102. It is found in Sanskrit twice on stones near Sandoway in South Arakan: see E.H. Johnston's article in BSOAS, London XI, Part 2, Plate IV, Figure 2, and pp. 359, 363-4, 383. It is found in either languages, set in moulds or stamped on countless terracotta votive tablets at almost all the ancient sites in Burma. As Coedès says (*JSS*, XX (1926), 5-6) it "must rapidly have acquireed in the eyes of the ancient Buddhists a sort of magic virtue,... a quite irresistible charm for the conversion to the Faith of any who had not heard it."

2. Vinaya, Mahāvagga I, 1. Paṭiccasamuppāda, the Chain of Causation. See Excerpt 1 (leaves 1 to 5) of the Khinbagôn goldleaf manuscript. In Pāli. Edited by U Lu Pe Win (*ARASB*, 1939, 12-21). A fuller version, starting from the beginning of the vagga, is shown on a stone found at Kunzeik village on the east bank of Sittaung river, some 40 miles north-east of Pegu (Aung Thaw, Historical Sites in Burma, pp. 110-111).

3. Vinaya, Mahāvagga I, 22. Sakka's song in praise of gotama entering Rājagaha. See excerpt 7 (leaves 18-19) of Khinbagôn goldleaf manuscript.

4. Dīgha Nikāya 2. Sāmaññaphala suttanta 49. Dr. Jīvaka's praise of Gotama before king Ajātasattu, iti pi so bhagavā etc. See excerpt 8 (leaf 20) of Khinbagôn goldleaf manuscript. Also on the second Maunggan goldplate. Also, clear but fragmentary, on goldleaf found at Kyundawzu village, Śrī Kṣetra (Duroiselle, *ARASI*, 1929, Plate LI (a) and p. 109).

5. Dīgha Nikāya 16. Mahāparinibbāna suttanta. List of the 37 elements of Enlightenment, concluding with the āryan eightfold path. See excerpt 3 (leaf 6) of the Khinbagôn goldleaf manuscript. [The passage appears more than once in the canon, thus does not belong solely to this suttanat.]

6. Majjhima Nikāya 2. Mahāsīhanāda sutta 71-72. The four Vesārajjāni (self-confidences of a Buddha). See excerpt 4 (leaves 6-14) of the Khinbagôn goldleaf manuscript. [This passage also appears in numerous places in the canon.]

7. Khuddaka Nikāya 2 , Dhammapada gāthā 203. The four 'Bests' (seṭṭho). See excerpt 5 (leaf 18) of the Khinbagôn goldleaf manuscript.

8. Khuddaka Nikaya 12, Paṭisambhidāmagga. The fourteen buddhaññāṇāni (enlightened knowledges) See Excerpt 5 (leaves 14-17) of the Khinbagôn goldleaf manuscript.

9. The first Maunggun goldplate lists also in ascending numbers the four iddhipāda (bases of potency); four sammappadhana (right efforts); four satipaṭṭhānā (earnest thoughts); four ariyasaccāni (noble truths); four vesārajjani (confidences); five indriyāni (senses [I think Luce is wrong here indriyani as qualities are the same as balani, the forces on use to attain enlightenment and not the senses.]) ; five cakkūni (eyes [of the Buddha]); six asādharanāni (uniqueness of the Buddha); seven bojhangā (elements of Buddhahood [actually element of enlightenment for all the arhats not just the Buddha]); ariyo aṭṭhangiko maggo (eight-fold noble path); nine lokuttara dhammā(supernatural states

Nevertheless, there is an excerpt which can be said for certainty to be a quotation from the Paṭisambhidāmagga of the Khuddakanikāya:-

> katamehi bhagavā cuddasehi budhañāṇehi samannāgato tathāgato. dum[khe] ñāṇaṃ buddhāñāṇaṃ dukkhasamudaye ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ dukkhanirodhe ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminīpaṭipade ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇa (sic) atthapaṭisaṃbhide ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ dhammapaṭisambhide ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ niruttipaṭisambhide ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ paṭibhānapaṭisa[m]bhide ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ yamakapaṭihāre ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ [ma]hākārunasamāpattiyā ñāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ sabba[ññu]tañāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ anāvarañāṇaṃ buddhañāṇaṃ imehi bhagavā cuddasehi buddhañāṇehi samannāgato ti ti [sic][35]

There is also a list which cannot be identified. It is the list of Vipassanāñāṇa which our inscription enumerates only seven in contrast with the Visuddhimagga, eight and the Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha, ten. There are also stanzas traced to the Dhammapada and the Vinayapiṭaka.

Those which are found at Maunggan give us more variety. Apart from the ye dharmā and the stock passage praising the Buddha [iti pi so bhagavā], there are also passages from the Vibhaṅga of the Abhidhammapiṭaka, for example

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[supra-mundane ?]); ten balāni (strengths); fourteen buddhaññāṇāni (Buddha knowledges) eighteen buddhadhammāni (conditions of Buddha). [This is probably derived from a list like the Dasuttara suttanta of the Dīgha Nikāya.]

10. Abhidhamma Vibhanga (*PTS* VI, p. 144) - Pāli stone fragments (three pieces) found on the second terrace of the Bawbawgyi pagoda, Śrī Kṣetra. See *ARASI*, 1911, Plate XLVII (Figures 1 and 2) and p. 89; 1912, Plate LXVIII (Figure 1) and pp. 141-2. Edited by L. Finot in *JA*, (July- August 1912), 134-136, and (July-August 1913) 193-195. [Though Finot identifies this excerpt to be from the Dhammasangaṇī, Duroiselle suggests that it is from Vibhanga. They may probably be both right and wrong, since there are no exact passage like the one in the inscription. We have to assume that it derives from some Abhidhamma text very close to this two.]

11. Visuddhimagga, chapter XXI (Ñāṇamoli, Path of Purification, p. 745). List of seven of the eight ñāṇadassanā (contemplative knowledges) mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. See Excerpt 3 (leaf 5) of the Khinbagôn goldleaf manuscript. [Ray calls this Vipassanaññāṇa; I follow Ray.]

With all the evidence from the Pali canon, it is rather surprising that Luce does not arrive at the conclusion that these inscriptions belong to the Theravāda tradition.

[35] The text given here is according to the inscriptions, some spelling might not be in the received form. Emendations given in [ ] are Ray's. In the Paṭisambhidāmagga (Pali Text Society), the concluding sentences are as follows:

> Imāni cuddasa Buddhaññāṇāni. Imesaṃ cuddasannaṃ Buddhaññāṇānaṃ aṭṭha ñāṇāni sāvakasādharaṇāni, cha ñāṇāni asādharaṇāni sāvakehi.

samphusanā samphusitattaṃ vedanakhandho saññākhandho
sankhārakkhandho

ditthivipphanditaṃ ditthi anaṃ vuccati chalāyatanaṃpaccayā phasso
tattha kataṃ[a] phassapaccaya vedananaṃ ceta[s]i[kaṃ]

saññojanaṃ gah[o] paṭilaho paṭiggaho abhiniveso paramaso
mummago...[36]

The importance of these gold plate inscriptions is that the plates are in the form of palm-leaf manuscript. This suggests that there were some specimens of the Buddhist manuscripts extant at that time. The excerpt from the Pāli Abhidhamma affirms that they belong to the Theravāda tradition. And even though they do not exactly agree with the present version represented in the Tripiṭaka, there can be no doubt that they are quoted from some manuscripts, perhaps in a different version available at that time.

V. From Sāgaramatiparipṛcchā (?)

These three stanzas are found in Kedah in an inscription found in a ruined stūpa. It is palaeographically datable at around sixth century A.D. They have been identified by Lin Li-Kouang as a quotation from the Sāgaramatiparipṛcchā, a Mahāyāna text which is preserved only in the Chinese translation, though it is mentioned in the Śikṣāsamuccaya. The stanzas are as follows:-

Balāni daśa catvāri vāiśaradyāni yāni ca
Aṣṭādaśa ca Buddhānāṃ dharmmā āveṇikā hi ye
Ye pratītyasamutpannā na te kecit svabhāvataḥ
Ye' svabhāvan na vidyante teṣāṃ sambhāvataḥ kvacit
Jānīte ya imām kotīm akotīṃ jagatas samam
Tasya kotīṃ gataṃ jñānaṃ sarvvadharmmeṣu varttate[37]

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[36]See footnote 34: 10 of this chapter.

[37]See JRASMB, (1940), pp. 8-9. A translation is given "There are ten balas (powers), four vaisaradyas (assurances, extraordinary skills) and eighteen dharma āveṇkā of the Buddhas. The dharmas (moments of

In the Sāgaramatiparipṛcchā itself these three stanzas are not arranged as in the inscription. The first stanza is a common enumeration of the qualities of the Buddha, and the last two are the common stock for the Mahāyāna philosophical schools both Mādhyamaka and Yogācāra. Therefore, it is possible that they might have come from or heve been compiled from various sources other than the Sāgaramatiparipṛcchā.[38]

The first two types of the quotation inscription are found both in the Pyu and the Dvāravatī tradition. The ye dharmā in Sanskrit are found in Pyu, in West Borneo and in Java, but not in the Dvāravatī tradition. The script has strong influences of the Pallava script dated from the fifth century onward. Later the script shows more and more local style, but the text 'ye dhammā' remains the favorite quotation.

In the Dvāravatī tradition the Paṭiccasamuppāda and the Ariyasacca quotations are found inscribed on the Dharmacakra which deserves a close investigation later.

The fourth type is found only in the Dvāravatī tradition, the fifth only in the Pyu tradition. The sixth quotation is only found in the south of the peninsula.

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consciousness) which arise from co-operating circumstances have in no case real existence; there can be nowhere any (dharmas) which do not exist in the state of reality. Who knows this summit of the universe to be at the same time no summit- his knowledge, having reached the summit, extends over all dharmas". The translation of the second stanza as well as the third is rather awkward. Parallel stanzas appear in the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā, I:5, 12; XV: 6, etc.

[38]For reference to this text see *Bussho Kaisetsu Daijiten*, II: 31-32.

'Eulogy' Inscriptions

We find this type of inscription both as an independent eulogy stanza and as a benedictory beginning the main portion of inscription. The content is the praising of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. They can be roughly divided into two groups: the quotation one, that is to say the content is from a text, either canonical or extra-canonical, and the composed one, that is to say the content is not quoted from any text.

The ones which quote from the canonical are found in Maunggan, Hmawza, Burma. They belong to the Pyu tradition palaeographically dated in the fifth or sixth century, and have never been found in other areas. The texts, all in Pāli, are the stereotype passages eulogizing the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, and appear in the Pāli Suttantapiṭaka as follows:-

> iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho bhagavā
> vijjācaranasampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadamasārathi
> satthā devamanussānaṃ buddho bhagavā ti
>
> Svākkhyāto bhagavatā dhammo santitthiko akāliko ehipassiko
> opanāyiko paccataṃ veditabbo viññūhīti,

We do not find the one on the Sangha. Since the eulogizing the Triratna is normally recited together, one can infer here that there probably has been one on the Sangha too.[39]

The 'eulogy' inscription of which the text is extra-canonical are found to the east of Bangkok close to the Cambodian border, which belongs to the Dvāravatī tradition. But since the second part is in Khmer, it might belong to the people who speak that language. Using a script called 'late Pallava style' and dated 761 A.D.,[40] the inscription has two parts. The first has three verses eulogizing the three jewels,

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[39]See footnote 34: 4 of this chapter, and also N. Ray, (1946), pp. 33-34.

[40]*IT*, I: 179-186. The spelling in the inscription is given here strictly according to the decipherment.

the second part mentions the name Kamara ten[41] Buddhasira who gave cows to the temple and made his wish. We shall take into consideration the first part only.

The verses are written in a highly ornate language and the meter is Vasāntatilakā. The text has long been thought to be the first Pāli literature composed in Thailand. However, we find identical verses at the beginning of Telakaṭāhagāthā, a work composed in Sri Lanka. The work is published in the Journal of the Pāli Text Society, 1884 edited by Edmund R. Goonaratne. He gave the account of the work as follows:

> This is a small poem in ninety-eight Pāli stanzas, in which are embodied some of the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism. The verses are pathetic, and are written in elaborate language. The author is unknown.............. The verses are supposed to represent the religious meditations and exhortations of the great Thera who was condemned to be cast into a caldron of boiling oil, on suspicion of his having been accessory to be intrigue with the Queen Consort of King Kelani Tissa. Reference to the story is made in the Mahāvaṃsa, the Rasavāhinī, and the Sinhalese work, the Saddhammālankārwee, which is a compilation from the Rasavāhinī. The incident happened in the reign of King Kelini Tissa 306–207 B.C.[42]

The verses in question appear as the second, third and fourth verses of this work. Here are both versions compared[43]

#56
1. yo sabbalokamohito karuṇādhivāso
   mokkhāṃ karo (nirama)laṃ varapuṇacaṇḍo,
   ñoyyo da(mo na)vikulaṃ sakalaṃ vivuddho
   lokuttaro namatthi taṃ sirasā munendaṃ.

T(elakaṭāhagāthā)
2. yo sabbalokamahito karuṇādhivāso

[41]Kamara ten is a Khmer title of high official.

[42]*JPTS*, 1884, pp. 49.

[43]*Prachum.*, III: #56.

mokkhākaro ravikulalambarapuṇṇacando,
ñeyyodadhiṃ suvipulaṃ sakalaṃ vibuddho
lokuttamaṃ namatha taṃ sirasā munendaṃ.

#56
2. sopānamālam amalaṃ tiraṇālayassa
saṃsārasāgarasamuttaraṇāya setuṃ,
samvvādhatirāyyapi cajjattakhemama(ggaṃ)
dhammaṃ namassa ta sadā mūṇiṇā pasatthaṃ.

T.
3. sopānamālam amalaṃ tidasālayassa
saṃsārasāgarasamuttaranāya setuṃ,
sabbāgatībhayavivajjitakhemamaggaṃ
dhammaṃ namassatha sadā muninā paṇītaṃ.

#56
3. deyyaṃ dadāpyamapiyāttapasannacittā
dātvā narā phalamūlaṃ ratta(naṃ) sarānti,
taṃ savvadā dasavalena pi suppasatthaṃ
saṅghaṃ namassa ta sadā mitapuññakhettaṃ.

T.
4. deyyaṃ tad appam api yattha pasannacittā
datvā narā phalam ulārataram labhante,
taṃ sabbadā dasabalen'api suppasatthaṃ
saṅghaṃ namassatha sadāmitapuññakhettaṃ.

Considering that the Telakaṭāhagāthā is one complete whole and the words can be used for clarification where the readings of the inscription are obscure, we propose that the inscription has the Telakaṭāhagāthā as model, the difference is due merely to scribal error or to memory lapses. The second part of this inscription is in Khmer which too suggests that the Pāli part can be a quotation from some place else.

Now Law has assigned the Telakaṭāhagāthā as a tenth or eleventh century work.[44] If the reading of the date of the inscription is correct the work must have been

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[44]Law, (Jul 1938- Apr 1939), p. 25 ff. He gives a full translation of the text preceded with an introduction and a synopsis. "The Telakaṭāhagāthā (verses on oil-pot) is a non-canonical Pali poem dated the 10th or 11th century A.D. containing 98 stanzas written in chaste language. Its author is unknown. The story of this poem can be found in the Mahāvamsa (Ch. 22; narrated as briefly as possible), the Rasavahinī and the Sinhalese work Saddhammālaṅkāra which is a compilation from the Rasavahinī. The story is somewhat differently narrated in the Kakavaṇṇatissārañññavatthu. It is apparent from a careful study of the poem that the author was well acquainted with the texts and commentaries of the Buddhist scriptures and that he knew Sanskrit well. Although two stanzas at the end are missing, it is

written earlier than the eighth century, and we would have to allow some time before it reached Southeast Asia. However, the date given has been put in the parenthesis by the scholar who deciphered it. The script has been challenged by Prof. Uraisri Varasarin as being of a later period, namely the Angkorian, which started around the ninth century.[45] Whatever the case may be, the inscription cannot be dated later than the ninth century.

The importance of this discovery is that we have to reconsider the theory that Sinhalese or Sri Lankan Theravāda Buddhism had not come to this area until the tenth or eleventh century.[46] The quoting of this small work shows that at that time scholars,

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no doubt a Sataka (a poem in 100 stanzas). ...... The poem contains the religious exhortations of a Thera named Kalyāṇiya who was condemned to be thrown into a vessel of boiling oil as he was suspected to be an aider and abettor to an intrigue with the queen of king Kalaṇitissa who reigned at Kelaniya.

[45]Personal communication, August 1989.

[46]See for examples, N. Ray, (1946), p. 45. "In fact it seems that it was not till the middle of the twelfth century that Ceylon came to play any important role in the history of Buddhism in Burma. It was in 1167 that Panthagu, the then Primate of the Burmese kingdom, chose Ceylon as his refuge, and in 1180 Uttarajīva, the Primate who succeeded Panthagu, returned from a pilgrimage to Ceylon as the "First Pilgrim of Ceylon." In 1190 Capata, Uttarajīva's disciple, earned the title of the "Second Pilgrim to Ceylon." On his return tried to convert the whole realm to the Sinhalese form. These missions coupled with Capata's attempts to Sinhalese Burmese Buddhism led to the gradual predominance of Sinhalese Buddhism in Burma and wiping out of even the memory of the original source." What he means by "original source" is the "eastern Deccan and the Far South" of India. We do not object his opinion here, but cannot accept that Buddhism in Sri Lanka did have any impact on the situation of Buddhism in Burma at all. He seems to have ben obsessed by the history of the Sinhalese Sangha, rather than Sinhalese Buddhism. Of course, we do not possess any data before those Theras' going to Sri Lanka. But neither do we have any data on any Theras' going to eastern Deccan and the Far South of India. For the area other than Burma, see Saddhatissa, (1972), p. 211. He describes the situation as follows: "although Buddhism was soon well established in Ceylon, there are very few historical references to Buddhist contact with mainland South-East Asia. In fact it was Mahāyāna form of Buddhism that first penetrated the mainland kingdoms direct from India. However the first contact was made before 1000 A.C..." See also Charles F. Keyes, (1977), who has made numerous statement on history of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia, however, they are mostly wrong. For examples (p. 79) "Although Theravāda doctrines were probably transmitted orally in Pali from the time of Aśoka, they were not written down until the first century B.C. In the fifth century A.D., the Theravāda Buddhist tradition was interpreted by the famous monk Buddhaghosa, and his interpretations have remained the orthodox interpretations for Theravāda Buddhists to this day....... Orthodox Theravāda Buddhism, the Buddhism that used Pali texts and followed the interpretations of Buddhaghosa, did not flourish in either Ceylon or Southeast Asia until many centuries after Buddhaghosa death. Although Buddhism was an important element in the syncretic traditions of classic civilizations in Southeast Asia, such Buddhism was most usually that of a school other than Theravādina. Moreover, it was often found as one among Indianized traditions as can be clearly seen, for example, in the case of Angkor. Indeed at times, Theravāda Buddhism all but disappeared; however, a few centers in southern India, Ceylon, lower Burma and perhaps central Thailand continued to preserved the tradition despite the vicissitudes to which it was subjected."

at least those who composed this inscription, knew of Sinhalese Buddhism. The fact that this is a small work confirms that they knew it not just by name but by its canonical works and non-canonical as this one as well.[47] And this also shows that the relation between Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka had long been established.

The inscriptions in Pāli which are not quotations are mostly short; they are found in the Dvāravatī tradition. The text is a simple eulogy to the Triratna such as:

Namo Buddhassa namo Dhammassa namo Sanghassa[48]

The inscriptions of this type in Sanskrit belong to the Khmer mandala, in the peninsula and insular areas of Southeast Asia. In the Khmer mandala, Buddhism is mentioned along with Hinduism especially the Śivite cult. Sometimes it gives the picture of being less prominent than Hinduism.[49] However, most of the inscriptions found are of the royal type and Hinduism plays a more important role, being used as a political instrument. It is not uncommon to find an inscription eulogizing both Hindu gods and the Buddhas as well as the Bodhisattvas.[50] Inscriptions which are purely Buddhist are definitely of the Mahāyānistic or Tantric tradition. They show profound understanding in the Mahāyāna doctrine such as the inscription[51] which face A dated 1036 and face B dated 1046:

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[47]Scholars seem to be very conservative on the point that ancient Southeast Asia possessed a complete canon at all. From the presence of this minor work we can infer that these traditions possessed probably at least most parts of the canon. And this may very well be the Pali canon, see footnote 34 of this chapter.

[48]*IT*, I: 287-291.

[49]See Briggs's article (Oct-Dec 1951) on "the Syncretism of Religions in southeast asia, especially in the Khmer Empire," in *JOAS*, LXXI: 230-249. A more recent and better study done by Filliozat, (1981), in *BEFEO*, LXX: 59-99.

[50]*IT*, III: 107 etc.

[51]*IT*, III: 176-180.

Face A.
namo vuddhāya saṃsāra samamadhyusthitāya yaḥ
ādvyopi catushkāyaś caturmmārabhayād iva.
(The inscription continues in Khmer about the merit made by a king)

Face B.
tasmai śivāya (na)mo namasya pādāmvujojasravajādibhirryaḥ
ekasvabhāvo khilabhā(vayukto)ranekabhāvopyapi śūnyabhāvaḥ
(The inscription continues in Sanskrit eulogizing and giving some account of the king named Śrī Sūryavarman)

The interesting point here is the mentioning of the Catuṣkāya of the Buddha. The doctrine of Kāya mostly is known as Trikāya, The Three Bodies not the Four Bodies. But the Catuṣkāya is not without textual reference since the Sambhogakāya is sometimes divided into two types.[52]

The doctrine of Face B seems to be that of the Vijñānavāda for the Svabhāva theory is one of the main tenets of that school. Therefore, even if we have the word Śūnyabhāva here we cannot ascribe it to the Mādhyamaka school.

Later in the twelfth century we find the doctrine of Trikāya in the "hospital inscriptions" of Jayavarman VII.[53] The content of the inscription seems to be that of the Vijñānavādin too. In the following stanza, the Buddha is eulogized together with the Bhaiṣyaguru Buddha, the Sun and the Moon as follows:

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[52]For detailed explanation on the Four Bodies, see Bukkyu Dai Jiten, II: 1789-1791; see also Nagao, (1973), pp. 32-33. He explains:

> The sāṃbhogika-kāya, the second body, is the same as the Reward-body described above [saṃbhoga-kāya]. Saṃbhoga means "enjoyment." ... The Buddha's biography tells us that after he attained his enlightenment under the bodhi-tree, the Buddha spent several weeks pondering, wiht appreciation, over the dharma which he himself had realized. This is called "the Buddha's own enjoyment of the dharma-delight" ( ). .. But this "for one's own enjoyment" ( ) later developed into "for the enjoyment of others" ( ). This is the sharing of one's own dharma-delight with others, i.e. the preaching of the dharma to others. Therefore, the sāṃbhogika-kāya is isaid to be the Buddha-body seen at an assembly for sermons- a gathering of people who wish to hear the Buddha's preaching. This is none pther than a Buddha-body that is visible, in the sense that human beings can understand it intellectually (and emotionally, as well).

[53]*IT*, IV: 189-201; 202-214.

namo vuddhāya nirmmāṇadharmmasāmbhogamūrttaye
bhāvābhāvadvayātīto['] dvayātmā yo nirātmakaḥ
bhaiṣyaguruvaidūryyaprabharājajinanname
kṣemārogyāni janyante yena nāmāpi śṛṇvantām
śrīsūryyavairocanacandarociḥ śrīcandravairocanarohiṇīśaḥ
rujāndhakārāpaharau prajānāṃ munindrameror jayatām upānte

In the Khmer mandala and the mandalas in the peninsula and insular regions, there are also eulogy inscriptions of mixed type. They consist of both Hindu and Buddhist elements, for instance, the one found in Java:

namaś śivāya namo buddhāya[54]

In these cases the Hindu gods are placed before the Buddha, but there is no sign of Buddhism being inferior to the Hinduism. This type of inscription has never been found in either Pyu and Dvāravatī traditions. In fact Sanskrit inscriptions, Hindu or Buddhist, are very rare in both mandalas.

Another type of the eulogy inscription is the eulogy stanza for a king or a noble using Buddhist qualities to praise their deeds which sometime give us an insight to the situation of Buddhism at that time. There is an inscription dated in tenth century A.D. in the Khmer mandala which tells us about a noble man who rescued Buddhist faith from a state of oblivion as follows:

Thank to the effort of Kīrtipaṇḍita, the Buddhadharma has reappeared from the storm like, in Autumn, the Moon coming out of the cloud of the rainy season.
In his person, the doctrines of śūnyatā, of the citramātra, etc., which have been eclipsed by the night which is the wrong teaching, reappear like the rising Sun.
......

[54]Damais, (1951), p. 43. See also de Casparis, (1950, 1956).

> He illuminates the flame of the True Dharma, the Madhyavibhāgaśāstra and others, which extinguish the suffering caused from the defilements. He draws from the foreign country, to expand the studies of Buddhism, multitude of philosophical treatises and texts such as the Tattvasaṃgrahaṭikā.[55]

From this inscription our assumption that the Yogācāra school of the Mahāyāna was prominent in the Khmer tradition is confirmed.

Donation and Royal inscriptions

Inscriptions of this type are found written in Pāli, Sanskrit and local languages which usually form the second part of the inscription. In the Dvāravatī tradition, we have examples of donation inscriptions of common people which are unique only to this tradition. In other areas most of them belong to kings, royal family or high officials and usually of later date. In inscriptions on history, most of them consist of royal deeds, biography of the king, praising of the royal worthiness. Concepts from Buddhism are used in eulogizing.

Donation inscriptions of the Dvāravatī tradition

In the donation inscription of the Dvāravatī mandala, we find much material to study as to how the Buddhists of that time made merit and what kind of wishes they had in mind. All of them are dated from the sixth to the eighth century. They are written in ancient Mon, the oldest form of the Mon language which is different from old and medieval Mon found in Burma.[56]

The merits performed in these inscriptions are of typical Buddhist which can be found in India, Sri Lanka or even in the present day Buddhist countries. They consist

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[55]*IC*, VI: 195 ff. Inscription de Vat sithor (Srei Santhor). The translation is mine.

[56]Diffloth, (1981), pp. 117 ff. In this article "Reconstructing Dvāravatī -Old-Mon," he gives a summary of Old Mon inscriptions found in Thailand. The earliest specimens are of 6th century. For a study of vernaculars in inscriptions of Southeast Asia see Shorto, (1979).

of casting the images of Buddha, renovating the images, probably applying new paint or goldleaves to the images, building stūpas and vihāras, donating gifts to monastery, setting animals free.

The donors are also varied. They are common people, dancers, rshis, Brāhmans, shamans, kings and noble men.[57] And in some cases, a king with his people joined in making merit; the text runs:

> This merit is done by the king together which his friends who are the common people.[58]

Or in some cases noble men joined with his entourages:

> Kundarījana who built the realm of Anurādhapura have the Elder Sināyadha as representative together with people of Anurādhapura arranges the singing and dancing for the commemoration of this sanctuary.[59]

This shows that at that time (sixth century A.D.), there was a close tie between the ruler and the ruled as well as a close tie between Anurādhapura and the area of central Thailand, if the name "Anurādhapura" in the inscription above means Anurādhapura in Sri Lanka.

Their wishes are mainly to transfer merit both to the living ones and to the dead, to oneself. There are also wishes to see Maitreya or to become a Buddha. Some wish for the well being of all living beings.

The language used is ancient Mon, but there are also Pāli and Sanskrit words in the inscriptions such as puñña and puṇya. Most of the time they appear in both Pāli

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[57]This type of inscriptions is published in *IT*, II. Unfortunately the texts deciphered and their translations are in Thai.

[58]*IT*, II: 81.

[59]*IT*, II: 42-47. The word "kundarījana" may be a form of Pāli "kuṇḍalī" which means "one who wears earring?"

and Sanskrit forms, sometimes in the same inscription. In some cases the word cannot be said to be Pāli or Sanskrit. It is a hybrid between the two such as upājhāya (P. upajjhāya, S. upādhyāya), Meyatrīyyā (P. Metteyya, S. Māitreya).

Donation inscriptions in other traditions

We do not have any data from Burma on this type of inscriptions until the twelfth century, the period when the Sinhalese Theravāda had already attained its supremacy.

In the Khmer mandala, some interesting inscriptions have been found in the Northeast of Thailand. The texts are about the building of a monastery.[60] They also mention the setting of Sīmā or boundary slabs which seem to be popular in this area. These slabs carved with scenes from Jātakas, Avadāna and the life of the Buddha have been found. They belong to the Dvāravatī tradition but show a considerable influence from both local and Khmer art. Some other inscriptions in the Khmer tradition mention the casting of images both Hindu and Buddhist.[61]

It is in inscriptions found in the Khmer tradition that reveal the clear tendency of synthesis between Hinduism and Buddhism. The images are usually mentioned

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[60] *IT*, I: 251-267; 280-283.

[61] *IT*, III:105-117.

Ekatra saṅgatāmūrtti ssthāpitā śambhuśārṅginoḥ/
śrīvatsenātra pūrvvayā sāmagnā cirakālataḥ//
munivedādriśākendre munīndrapratimā punaḥ/
tenāpi yajvanā sthāne sthāpitā śaṅkrātprati//
bhūyaśśilāmayī devī sthāpitā sugatātprati/
nāmnā śrīśikharasvāmi dvijena varajvanā//

He (Yajñavarāha) cast the images of Śiva and Brahma together with Viṣṇu (and set them) in the same place. These iamges had long merged into the east bank of the river.
In the śaka 849 (A.D. 955), apart from establishing an image of Śiva, he (Śikharasvami) also established an image of the Buddha in the same place. Moreover, this Brāhmana Śikharasvāmi, apart from establishing the Buddha image, he also established a stone image of the Devī...

See also K. Bhattacharya, (1961), pp. 27, 34 ff., 39 ff.

together. Hindu gods and Buddha as well as other Buddhist images are cast by the same patronage.[62] Hindu brāhman is said to study Buddhism as well as Hindu philosophy. Buddhism is reported as having adopted the ritual of Hinduism.[63]

These inscriptions are mostly set up by a king or nobility. These inscriptions give us some data on the situation between the religions and the ruler. There is one that is worth mentioning. It is the inscription of Sūryavarman, an overlord of the Angkorian mandala who probably at one time had supremacy over the central part of Thailand which was formerly under the Dvāravatī influence. The text is about 'Phra Niyama' (the royal rule) of Sūryavarman:

> Śaka 944 (1023 A.D.) etc.... His Majesty the King Sūryavarman (Phra pāda Karaten kamtuan añ Srī Suryavarmandeva) issued this royal rule for people to observe as Samācāra, that is the rule to be followed. In the residence of the Tāpasa or the monks ordained as a Mahāyāna or a Sthavīra, let them be ordained with true mind, offering the Tapas to His Majesty the King Śrī Sūryavarmandeva. If anyone invades and does bad deeds in these Tapovanāvāsa, disturbing these ascetics who are performing the Yogadharma, and thus, preventing them to pray in order to offering the Tapas to His Majesty the King... Let him be apprehended and brought to the court so that he can be judged the most severely.[64]

This is the only inscription in which we have the sectarian names, the Mahāyāna and the Sthavīra. The king seems to have supported them both on condition that they pray for him. The later part of the inscription is illegible, there seems to be more 'Phra Niyama' concerning religious matters.

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62 See the previous footnote for references.

63 See K. Bhattacharya, (1961), pp. 34 ff.

64 *IT*, III:159-163; *IC*. K.410. Coedès, (1961), No. 19. The translation is mine.

Another aspect of the Khmer inscription is the curse to one who plunders the gift to the religions. An inscription of a Rājabhikṣu, probably a prince who became a monk, says: (The number is according to the line of the inscription.)

Face I

1. āsīt śrīrājabhikṣuḥ pravaranaraśirā–sa
2. dājuṣṭpādāṃbhojāḥ kurvvīta sīmāḥ pravara
3. maniśilā varddha śobhāḥ catasraḥ vīsarjja
4. d bhūṣitāṅgān sugatatnuyutān kṣetradā
5. sādiyuktān vīharān sānghikānanāṃ
6. daśa ca sakathine cīvare dve sacaityaḥ//
7. sarvvānāṃ jagatāṃ hitāya divase kurvvīta dānaṃ sadā
8. vastraṃ cīvaradanam annam aśanaṃ pānaṃ satāmvūlakam
9. ārāmaṃ vividhāvaropitatarupuṣpaiḥ phalaiḥ nna-kaṃ
10. śrīmatsaṅghaniṣvitas surataruḥ śrīrājabhikṣur yy---
11. caturjjāyai- dattaṃ me calayanti durātmaka- (āḥ)
12. narakaviṅśan te śeṣaṃ santānair yyanti saptabhi- (ḥ)

Face II

1. -- trikonā naraka sughorāḥ
2. - ṇyacatūkonakṛtā sugāḍhāḥ
3. pañcaśaśsaptadaśaṣṭakonāḥ
4. pāpiṣṭhvāsāya pare pare syuḥ
5. - - - sāyantrasamanatasaṇgatāḥ
6. - - - - - - - - māṅsamedhakāḥ
7. - - - - - - - ḥ jīvitihiṅsakīdhamāḥ
8. savisphuriṣṅā narakāḥ pare kva cit.

(The remaining part is the list of donation.)

The cursing part is quite a common practice in the Khmer tradition. We also find this cursing part in the Burmese inscriptions of the Theravīda tradition some centuries later. But in the Burmese ones, the curse usually is followed by blessings for those who abstain from stealing or damaging the gifts donated to the monks.

Inscriptions from Śrī Vijaya mandala in South Thailand, also in Sanskrit dated around the seventh or eighth century also inform us about the building of monasteries and stūpas, giving gift to the monks and Brāhmans, casting Bodhisattva images such as Padmapāṇī and Vajrapāṇī.[65] In one inscription, datable at around seventh to ninth

[65] *IT*, I: 187-222.

century, the distribution of stationary to copy the manuscripts is mentioned together with the adoration of the Prajñāpāramitā and Agastya:

> ....the Cankrama, the refectory, together with the Uposatha and the food for the individual monks belonging to the community (sānghikapaudgalaṃ) (are prepared) everyday.
>
> The adoration of the (Prajñā?) pāramitā, the writing (copying?) together with the notepad and ink, the food for the group of Brahmin who belong to the Mahātman Agastya Rshi (ijyāgastimahātmano dvijagaṇasya–ānnañ ca)
>
> Sermon which does not lack the gift such as incense, lamp, garland, flag, cāmara, Chinese (silk) flag.
>
> Other meritorious deeds according to the Doctrine, the unceasing observance according to the Dharma, protecting the people, the equanimity on the desirable and the undesirable, he overcoming of senses (sensual pleasure....
>
> By him who has become rich by (his valor)...Arnāya by name.[66]

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[66] *IT*, I: 44-47. Coedès, (1961), pp. 34-36, inscription no. XXVII. (The metre is śārdūravikrīḍita except for the last stanza is indravajra. - stands for a long syllable, / , for a short syllable)

(2) - - - / / - / - / / / - - - / - - / -
- - - ha caṅkramāśanagṝhaṃ sopoṣadhāgārakam
bhaktaṃ sāṅghikapaugalam pratidinnaṃ.....r./ - - / -
- - - / / - / - / / / - - - / - - / -

(3) - - - / / - / - / / / - - - / - - / -
--(p)āramitārccanaṃ sahamaṣīpatrārppaṇaṃ lekhanam
ijyāgastimahātmano dvijagaṇasyānnañ c. - - / -
- - - / / - / - / / / - - - / - - / -

(4)- - - / / - / - / / / - - - / - - / -
(tyā)g(e) nārahitā sadharmmakathanā dhūpapradīpānvitā
mālādāmavitānacāmaravatī cīnadhv(aj) ----
- - - / / - / - / / / - - - / - - / -

(5) - - - / / - / - / / / - - - / - - / -
(p)uṇyañ canyad api pradiṣṭam aniśaṃ dharmmaḥ prajapālanam
iṣṭāniṣṭasamatvam indriyajayaḥ khedas su. ṛ.. ṛ / -
- - - / / - / - / / / - - - / - - / -

(6) - - / - - / / - / - -
- ryyāptabhogena y / - / - -
arnnāyanāmā g / / - / - -
- - / - - / / - / - -

This inscription reveals the religious situation in the peninsula of Thailand as of mixed type, having both Buddhism, which is evidently Mahāyāna, and Hinduism.

So far we can see that Buddhist inscriptions in Southeast Asia seem to be divided into two main areas.

The ones in Pāli are found in Pyu mandala in the middle Irrawadi valley in Burma and the Dvāravatī mandala in the central and the upper central to the northeastern parts of Thailand. They are mostly quotations from canonical texts with the exception of a few royal inscriptions in Pāli found in the north of Thailand.

Those in Sanskrit, and those which have Mahāyānistic elements belong to the Khmer and the Śrī Vijaya mandalas. They are also found in Java and West Borneo. The ones which quoted from a text appear to be of the same date as those of the Pyu and the Dvāravatī.

In the Pyu mandala both Pāli and Sanskrit inscriptions of the quotation type are found, but the ones in Sanskrit are of a later date and rare. In the Dvāravatī tradition Sanskrit inscription of this type is yet to be found. The donation inscriptions with the wishes and the transferring of merit written solely in vernacular language are only found in the Dvāravatī tradition.

The 'ye dharmā' stanza is the most popular text. The popularity of the stanza is not limited to India, Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, but is found also in the Yunnan area south of China. The stanza is found in the same inscriptions with other Mahāyāna and Tantric texts, therefore it has to be identified as belonging to those traditions.[67] Our problem is when the stanza is found alone either in Pāli and Sanskrit we cannot simply assign them as belonging to either the Theravāda, or Mahāyāna. Language like Pāli was also evidently used in the inscriptions of other sects than

[67]W. Liebenthal, (1947, 1955). See also footnote 11 of this chapter.

Theravāda found in South India,[68] and it was not only Mahāyāna that used Sanskrit as their sacred language.[69] To complicate the issue, Sanskrit was sometimes used as sacred language to the Abhayagirivihāra in Sri Lanka.[70] We shall return to this problem later.

So far we can also see that these inscriptions have a close relation one way or another to the religious buildings or objects. We therefore shall present the archaeological data so as to depict the context in which these inscriptions appear.

Archaeological data

Our knowledge in this field is rather inadequate. We have less data in some areas such as Burma, and more data in other areas such as Cambodia. In Thailand though the situation has somewhat improved. The data are, due to the lack of the major plan in the excavation, more like jigsaw puzzles with the missing pieces. Most of the data are interpreted by art historians who do not agree among themselves about the date and the styles.[71] Thus, any statement made on the subject has to be taken as provisional.

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[68]See for examples, *EI* XX, 1929-30, pp. 16-17; 19 ff.; 21 ff.; XXXV, 1963-64, pp. 6 ff. The difference is only that cluster consonants are usually write as a single consonant for examples, raño for rañño; budhasa for buddhassa. The declension such as nānadesasamanagatānaṃ etc., and the verb form such as parigahitam, hotu etc., seem to be by and large the same as Pāli. It is worth noting that these inscriptions which use a language with close affinity to Pāli are from the Andhra area such as Nāgārjunakonda, Amaravatī. The schools mentioned are Aparaseliyas, Caityakas, Kāśyapīyas, Bhadarāyanīyas, and of course the "Theriyānaṃ Tambapaṃṇakānaṃ." Inscriptions from the other areas such as North or West India usually use a language close to Sanskrit. This is probably the matter of familiarity to such forms or sound, rather than using different languages to differentiate schools. The Sangīti of the Buddhists done in different place such as in the north would probably sound close to Sanskrit and finally the text does become Sanskrit. Whereas that which is done in the South probably would sound like Pāli, and finally the text becomes standardized in that form of language. The proper translation of the word "saṅgīti", as we permit ourselves to suggest, "editing or prove reading by sound", unlike our present system which is done by eyes.

[69]For examples, the Sarvastivādins, the Mahāsāṅghikas, the Dharmagutakas.

[70]See Gunawardana, (1966), p. 57.

[71]See *ARASI*, *ARASB*, *BEFEO* in Thailand the most recent report is published by the Department of Fine Arts. Unfortunately it is in Thai only. One may rely on Higham, (1989), as main source for archaeological finds in Thailand.

There are four main types of Indian art that affect the art of Southeast Asia, the Amarāvatī (second and third centuries A.D.), the Gupta (fourth to sixth centuries A.D.), the Pallava (550–750 A.D.), and the Pāla (750–900 A.D.).[72] Added to this we have to take into account the influence from Sri Lanka especially from the Anurādhapura period (third century A.D.- eighth century A.D.) which, by no means, less affects Southeast Asian art than that of India.[73]

However, this does not mean an absence of the process of localization. Southeast Asian cultures of different areas modifed all these influences and made them their own at least as early as the fourth or fifth centuries.[74] In addition to localization there is also sublocalization among different traditions, especially in cases where there is a shift of political or cultural dominance.[75] The best examples are the central part of Thailand and the peninsula as well as the insular areas of Southeast Asia. The areas in the boundaries between different traditions tend to create the style of mixed influences.

We also have to pay attention to other aspects of these data. The influences from India and Sri Lanka are not the same in different areas. And in some areas once it was influenced by one style of art tended to preserve the old style. But in some other areas the new style superseded the old one.

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[72]Wheatley, (1961), p. 193. The list is from Wales's book *The Making of Greater India.*

[73]See K. Bhattacharya, (1961), pp. 18 ff. Sirisena, (1978). In *Oriental Art*, pp. 97 ff., Sri Lanka is treated in the section of Southeast Asia. Boisselier explains "It is mainly on the account of Sri Lanka's (Ceylon's) influence that the chapter devoted to that country has been placed as an introduction to the section of this book dealing with South-east Asia.... It seems likely that Sri Lanka served as a link between India and South-east Asia during the very earliest centuries of Indian influence in that part of the world, and the development of the island's influence there has continued almost unbroken to this day."

[74]See Dupont, (1949), D'Ancona, (1952).

[75]For examples art of the Dvāravatī tradition was influenced by the Khmer when this latter dominated the area early in the eleventh century, the art of Śrī Vijaya in the south was influenced by both Dvāravatī and Khmer. The art of Dvāravatī in the Northeastern Thailand was highly localized and sometimes also influenced by the Khmer art.

Since it is not possible to present these immense data in detail, we shall try to summarize the data into topics as follows:

Architectural building

Only a few ancient buildings survive the time and probably none has been free from reconstruction and addition. This is partly due to the fact that Buddhism continues to be a living faith in Southeast Asia. Besides that, not just different types of Buddhism have been flourishing in different periods; Hinduism has always been present in the scene. These different faiths are sometimes preferred simultaneously, sometimes one of them predominates. We therefore have buildings which started off as Buddhist, but then were changed to Hindu, and vice versa.

Most of the buildings in Buddhism in the Pyu and Dvāravatī traditions are stūpas and probably vihāras as well as other buildings. The stūpas show influence from the Andhra area, especially that of Amarāvatī.[76] They are the hemisphere shape mound, and later the square or rectangular base, sometimes very elaborate, is added. At Pong Tuk which belongs to the Dvāravatī mandala the architectural styles and the planning have been studied by Sirisena who has arrived at the conclusion that they are similar to those of the Anurādhapura style of Sri Lanka.[77] That the area has an early contact with Anurādhapura is supported by the inscription mentioning the name of the city.[78]

In the Dvāravatī tradition the stūpas are decorated with bas-relief in terra cotta or stucco depicting episodes from the Jātakas and the Avadāna.[79] In most cases

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[76]Department of Fine Art, (1988), p. 107 ff.

[77]Sirisena, (1978).

[78]See supra. footnote 58 of this chapter.

[79]Dupont, (1959), Priya Krairiksh, (1974).

we do not really know the position of these stūpas in relation to the plan of the city. Fortunately the new technique of aerial photography has rendered us some service here.[80] However, in some areas such as Burma, due to the policy of its government, the data of this sort have not been available.

Most of the cities in the Dvāravatī tradition are of an oval or round shape with moats encircling the cities. The main stūpa usually the biggest in the city will be found in the center of the city. We also find large sanctuary and stūpa outside the city. For example, Nakhon Pathom, known in the local chronicle as Nagara Jayaśri the biggest city among the ancient cities in Southeast Asia, has the Cula Pathon (P. Cūla Padona) in the center of the city and outside the city, the Pra Pathom Cetiya. We may assume that the stūpa in the center of the city serves as the main monument for all the people, and the one outside is probably for the forest monks.

The building of stūpa over a grave is older than Buddhism itself. In the canonical work stūpa does not have to be built in a monastery. It can stand as a monument by itself. But this does not mean that there can be no stūpas in the monastery. The point is that the main stūpa in a city or in a pilgrimage does not have to be solely owned by one school of Buddhism. As in Andhra in India, we find inscriptions and records that numerous monks of various schools live harmoniously by the great stūpas such as Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunikonda.[81] Ancient Southeast Asia seems to have followed the example in India, for most of the monastery remains are found near the stūpa but not actually in the same boundary.[82] Even today in Burma, monastery for monks (sanghāvāsa) and the temple for the Buddha (buddhāvāsa) are

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[80]S. Vallibhotama, (B.E. 2525 = A.D. 1982).

[81]Here are examples of schools figure in the inscriptions found around Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakonda : Bahuśrutīyas, Caityakas, Purvaśailas, Aparamahavanaseliyas, Aparaseliya, Siddhārthikas, Tambapannakas (Theravādins).

[82]Boisselier, (1966) in *Boranavithya Ruang Muang U-Thong*, pp. 161 ff.

still built separately. The same tradition was observed in Thailand until recently. Even the tradition has been neglected, it is still preserved in the plan of a monastery which consists of two areas separated, one for monks (saṅghāvāsa) and one, for the Buddha (buddhāvāsa).

The stūpa also has a symbolic significance.[83] It is not just a symbol of the nirvana of the Buddha, but the Buddha himself when it houses the relics, especially the śarīradhātu (the 'body' relics).

In the areas where Sanskrit inscriptions with strong Mahāyāna characteristics, the architectural structures that we find are the buildings which house the images in contrast with the stūpas which cannot be entered. The structure can be very complex such as the cases of Bayon in Cambodia. The stūpa in Mahāyāna is also on a grand scale such as the Barabudur in Java.[84]

Images: Buddha and Bodhisattva

The earliest style of Buddha images found in Southeast Asia are those which have been labelled 'Amarāvatī.' But actually they should be named 'à la Amarāvatī' since except for the one found in Celebes, they are the works of local artists and of a later date. Pierre Dupont has made a detailed study on the subject and come to the conclusion that all of them show strong influence from the Anurādhapura art of Sri Lanka.[85] D'Ancona has a slightly different idea on the subject, he thinks that among these images there are three which are imported, these are the images found in Champa, Java and Celebes. The one found in Champa tradition belongs to the Amarāvatī style and should be dated around fourth century A.D., the other two are

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[83]Several studies have been done on the concept of stūpa, see for example Gombaz, (1933 ff.), Snodgrass, (1985).

[84]For the study of Barabodur see de Casparis, (1950); Mus, (1935); Gomez, (1981). For literary source see Lancaster's article in Gomez, (1981).

[85]Dupont, (1949).

imported from Sri Lanka dated sixth century A.D.[86] Whatever the case may be, they agree with each other on one point, that the ones found in Korat, Pong Tuk, Java show strong influence from Sri Lanka and from the Gupta style.

These Buddha images are in standing posture with the Vitarka and Abhaya mudrā, the style that prevails in Andhra and in Anurādhapura at around the same time. Later on in the Gupta style the favorite mudrā for the standing Buddha is the Varada and Abhaya mudrā, for the seated Buddhas, the Dharmacakra mudrā.[87]

In addition to the standing postures, we have three seated styles: the Vīrāsana, Vajrāsana and the European style, (seated on a chair with legs down). Those in the south Indian style including Sri Lanka are always in Vīrāsana and most of the time Vitarka or Abhaya mudrā. Sri Lankan artists seem also to prefer Dhyāna mudrā. Those in the north Indian styles such as the Gupta and the Pāla are in Vajrāsana and Dharmacakra or Bhūmisparśa mudrā. Boisselier has summarized the preference of these āsana and mudrā in Southeast Asian art as follows:

> It was at the very early date (certainly before the 7th century) that the whole of South-east Asia succumbed to the influence of south India and also, in all probability, Sri Lanka. The whole area, with the exception of Burma and Indonesia, was to retain a constant fidelity to the representations of figures seated in the vīrāsana posture (the right leg bent and positioned over the left leg and not in the vajrāsana posture in which the legs are tightly crossed in such a way as to render the soles of both feet visible) and an equally constant aversion to the dharmacakra mudra, the vitarka mudra being employed exclusively. The school of Dvāravatī (c. 7th–9th century), whose widespread and lasting influence was felt over most of the central and east of Indo-China, was responsible for developing and disseminating a special form of the vitarka mudra, executed with both hands positioned symmetrically... During its earliest centuries, Khmer Buddhist art faithfully followed the example of Dvāravatī, but it tended to neglect the art of Dvāravatī during the angkorian period, when its artists found themselves serving a country almost all of whose habitants were by then of the Mahāyāna

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[86]D'Ancona, (1952). See also A.B. Griswold, (1966), in *EOGHLUCE*, II: 37-73.

[87]See *Oriental Art*, pp. 364 ff., for the explanation of these mudrā. And also see Saunders, (1960).

> Buddhist persuasion. Those artists produced very few images representing figures in the attitudes other than the samādhi position, and they usually chose to depict the figures sitting on the coils of the nāga-king, Mucalinda.....
> To begin with Indonesian art responded to the same trends as the rest of South-east Asia; from the middle of the 8th century onwards, it moved intentionally towards the esoteric Mahāyāna Buddhism and was receptive to influences from the art of west Bengal.... If we consider its purely iconographic aspect, Indonesian art emerges as the art that was most obviously influenced by the traditions of north-east India.[88]

From this summary, the Dvāravatī tradition has a tendency to preserve the style of South India and Sri Lanka even when it is later influenced by the Gupta style. We have example of Buddhas sitting in European style in Dvāravatī tradition and in Java, but those of the Dvāravatī preserve the vitarka mudrā, those in Java follow the Gupta example very closely and are in dharmacakra mudrā.[89] Later on when the influence of the Pāla reached the region, the Burmese (Pagan), and to some extent the Lanna tradition of north Thailand, incorporated the vajrāsana and bhūmisparśa mudrā from the Pāla. This does not mean that the iconography is of Mahāyāna or Tantra, it remains strictly in the Theravāda tradition.

So far the iconography of the Buddha images cannot really tell us of what tradition they belong. However the images of the Bodhisattva, particularly if it is Avalokiteśvara or Mañjuśrī, we can be sure that it belongs to Mahāyāna tradition. These Avalokiteśvara images are found in Khmer mandala, in the south of Thailand and in Indonesia. They are less popular in the Pyu and the Dvāravatī tradition.[90] Some of them are found in the Dvāravatī area which had become under the influence of the Angkorian mandala, and have strong influence from the Khmer style.

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[88] *Oriental Art*, pp. 374 ff.

[89] There are nice examples of these Buddhas in Snellgrove, (1978). Compare pictures in p. 111 (Gupta style), p. 150 (Dvāravatī style), and p. 159 (Central Javanese style).

[90] See Micheal Aung-Thwin, (1985), pp. 36-37. Luce, (1969) I: 184-200. N. Ray, (1936).

As for images in the Tantric tradition, they are found only in a brief period in Khmer mandala. We have the images of Angkorian mandala said to be Prajñāpāramitā, Hevajra dated in the eleventh century.[91] The cult of Prajñāpāramitā is supported by inscriptions which tell us about the casting of the images. Of all the tradition in Southeast Asia, Java seems to be the area the most influenced by the Tantra Buddhism. An image of Vajradhara is found in Java. The best example is the Barabudur which the structure and the decoration has been identified with "mandala."[92]

Buddhist Symbols

Buddhist symbols in Southeast Asian art are numerous and most of them are motives decorating a building. We will limit ourselves only to three important genres, the Dharmacakra, the Sīmā and the votive tablets.

The first and the second seems to have been popular only in the Dvāravatī culture, the third is a pan-Buddhistic culture.

The concept of cakra together with its post has its root in the Vedic culture. It probably stands for the Sun. We find descriptions in the Vājapeya sacrifice:

> A wheel-shaped cake of grain is placed on the top of the post, to which animal victim is tied: a ladder is brought: the sacrificer mounts upon it saying to his wife: 'Come, let us mount to the sun!' He then mounts and seizes the wheel, saying, 'We have attained the sun, O gods.'[93]

The symbol of wheel also conveys the concepts of time and order (ṛta). And since the sun is considered as source of life and power, the cakra also stands for the

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[91] J.J. Boeles, (1966) in *EOGHLUCE*, II: 14-30.

[92] See Alex Wayman's article in Gomez, (1981), pp. 139-172.

[93] Paul Horsch, (1957), p. 63.

concept of power, hence the concept of cakravartin. The cyclical order of the sun is probably responsible in some part for the concept of Samsāra. We find in Buddhism, Bhavacakra and in Hinduism, Samsāracakra.[94]

Buddhism has appropriated the concept of cakra and modified it in many ways. Even if the cult of cakra is known in both Hinduism and Buddhism, it seems that Buddhist artists were the first to put it in a material form. It is usually set on a post, a symbol of stability and power and placed in the vicinity of a stūpa. The tradition of setting a pillar as symbol of sovereignty seems to be pre-Aśokan. But the pillar with the cakra seems to have originated in the Aśokan era at around the third century B.C.[95] We find very few cakra remains in India proper, however, we do have inscriptions mentioning the erection of this type of pillar in the Andhra area.

In Southeast Asia, the tradition is preserved in the Dvāravatī culture in which we find thirty three dharmacakra. It has been first identified as belonging to the chariot of Sūrya, the sun god. Some say that they stand for the royal power, the concept of Cakravartin. However, they are usually found with one or two deer, the representation of the scene of the First Sermon, the Dharmacakrapravartanasūtra (P. Dhammacakkappavattanasutta) in the deer park. And there are two with the inscriptions quoted from the canon to which we shall return later. Therefore, we have to conclude that they are Buddhist religious symbol.[96]

Some of the specimens found have the so-called 'Gajalakṣmī' or some other figures which scholars have not yet agreed upon in identifying. The Dharmacakra, the symbol of the first sermon, with the symbol of 'Gajalakṣmī' which represents the birth of the Buddha when set on the post before a stūpa, more or less, complete the

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[94]Ibid., p. 71.

[95]See examples and pictures in Irwin, (1973 ff.).

[96]An excellent study has been made in Thailand by Dhanit Yupho, (B.E. 2517 = 1974). There is a translation in English in the Thai Culture New Series, No. 25.

important episodes in the life of the Buddha, his birth, his first sermon and his nirvana.[97]

The next symbol the Sīmā which are boundary stones, usually four or six in number, delineating the limit of the area in which the Sangha performs the sanghakarma according to the Vinaya rules, are crucial to a Buddhist monastery. We find references to the object in inscriptions found in the northeast of Thailand where particular care has been invested upon carving scenes from the life of the Buddha and Jātaka and perhaps Avadāna on slabs of stone used as the Sīmā stones. The practice probably has some connection with the Neolithic cult of the area in which big stones are used probably to mark the boundary of a tomb or a sacred place.[98]

What is important here is that we have definite evidence that there are monasteries and the Vinaya rules being observed in some strict sense.

Votive tablets is a pan-Buddhist phenomenon. Some scholars have even described them as the Buddhist tradition par excellence, since the votive tablet has never been found in connection with Hinduism. They have been reported found in the vast area from India to south of China, Vietnam, and down to the Malay peninsula.[99]

Foucher connects its origin with the four great sites saying that they are made as souvenirs for the faithful who visit these holy places. They are also the easy and less expensive way of making merit.[100] They are usually inscribed either on the top rim, lower part, or on the reverse with the "ye dharmā stanza", in some cases

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[97]Irwin, (1973 ff.) studies the pillars in ancient India from pre-Aśokan time onward. He describes the early pillars as being set on the ground without any foundation. They usually collapsed quickly. The fact seems to have been recorded in the Buddhist legend, especially in the Divyāvadāna, Maitreya-Avadāna in which the collapse of the pillar set by the former Cakravartin is recorded.

[98]S. Vallibhotama, (1988) in *PSFT*, pp. 343-357.

[99]Coedès, (1925), in *Études Asiatiques*, II: 145-167.

[100]Foucher, (1911), p. 65 ff.

accompanied with the name of the donor or the name of the person to which the merit acquired by making the tablets is dedicated.[101]

Apart from these three main types of symbols we also find the Buddha footprint. The availabilty of these symbols suggests that Buddhism had spread through out the area, especially in the central part of Thailand at the latest in the fifth century.

Bas-reliefs

In the mainland, some of the bas-reliefs in the Dvāravatī tradition have survived. They are mostly the decorating subjects of a stūpa. Some are found in a cave and some on the Sīmā stones. The interesting point in these bas-reliefs is that they sometimes do not belong to the Pāli tradition as the quotation inscriptions found in the same area. In the archipelago, we have the famous bas-relief of Barabudur which has been, more or less, studied thoroughly by scholars and identified to be of the Mahāyāna inspiration.[102]

The early bas-reliefs are found in the Dvāravatī tradition dated from around seventh century A.D. None has been reported found in Burma older than the eleventh century. At the Cula Pathon cetiya (P. Cūla Padona) in Nakhon Pathom, bas-reliefs depicting Buddhist tales have been identified by Piriya Krairiksh[103] as having been inspired by the Sanskrit sources, especially the Avadānas of the Sarvāstivādin. In fact most of the stories can also be found in the Pāli Jātaka, however, there are some which cannot be found in the Pāli collections such as the story of the tortoise and the

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[101]For early specimens of these votive tablets see *IT*, I and II. In Burma see Luce, (1969), I: 15-16.

[102]See Jan Fontein' s article in Gomez, (1981), pp. 85-108.

[103]Piriya Krairiksh, (1974), p. 1.

merchants which is to be found only in the Sanskrit sources. We thus have to agree that they are from other sources.

After drawing the connection between the stories of the bas-reliefs and the Avadānas such as Divyāvadāna and Avadānaśataka which he believes to be the works of the Sarvāstivādin as well as the Mahāvastu of the Lokottaravādin, Krairiksh concludes that the Buddhism practised in Dvāravatī tradition is not the Pāli Theravāda Buddhism but rather the Sanskrit Hīnayāna Buddhism. He summarizes his point in the introduction as follows:

> The earliest representations of Buddhist folk tales found in Thailand probably are the terra-cotta and stucco reliefs discovered at Chula Pathon Cedi, near the town of Nakhon Pathom.... The reliefs are thought to illustrate the Jātaka stories...... These stories were compiled, together with their commentaries, in Sri Lanka in the fifth century A.D., and are known as the Jataka-atthakathā. As this work is included in the Pāli canonical literature of the Theravāda school of Buddhism, it is inferred that the Buddhism practised in Dvāravatī belonged to this school......
>
> However, it will be shown by the identification of some of the Chula Pathon reliefs and through the comparisons of the existing texts that, contrary to the expectation, the majority of the scenes illustrated do not derive from the Jataka-atthakathā, or from other Pāli sources, but from the Sanskrit Avadāna tales. These were the creations of the Sarvāstivāda, the Hīnayāna school of Buddhism that used Sanskrit..... This finding suggests that Sanskrit Hīnayāna Buddhism may have flourished in Dvāravatī during the sixth and the seventh centuries A.D., a hypothesis that is affirmed by the existence of two silver medals inscribed with the Sanskrit words 'śrīdvāravatīśvarapuṇya'... both of which were dated by palaeographical method to the seventh century A.D.[104]

We agree with him on the point that there was Hīnayāna Sanskrit Buddhism in Dvāravatī tradition and that this can also be supported by other bas-reliefs which depict the Buddha together with the Three Hindu gods and a Rshi. The scene may be

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[104]Ibid., pp. 1-2. An excellent review which gives us some other insightful information on this subject is written by Nandana Chutiwongs, (Jan 1978).

derived from the Mahāvastu or even may have been inspired by the Kāraṇḍavyūha, a Mahāyāna sūtra.[105] However, this cannot be used as a measure to rule out the existence of the Theravāda Buddhism in the Dvāravatī culture since we have strong support from the inscriptions in Pāli.

Moreover, these bas-reliefs may not belong exclusively to the Sarvāstivādin. The Avadāna and Jātaka literatures are not a private treasure of the Sarvāstivādin. They can also be found in most of the Buddhist Sanskrit traditions including Mahāyāna. We find examples such as the Mahāsanghikas' Mahavastu-avadāna, the Jātakastava, the Jātakamālā etc.[106] Avdāna literature exists even in the Pāli canon, and not as Krairiksh's statement "The Avdānas are tales of glorious and heroic deeds performed by the Buddha and some of his followers in their previous existences, and hence they hold the same relation to the Sarvāstivada school as did the Jātakas to the Theravāda school." This seems to suggest that there is no Avadāna literature in Pāli. And to be sure to connect all the Avadāna literature only to the Sarvāstivadins needs more solid data.[107] None of the identification of these bas-reliefs concerned is, as Krairiksh himself admits, conclusive.[108] The texts from which he says they are derived are not exclusively Sarvāstivadins, but also from the Mahāvastu, Jātakamāla, Sūtrālankāra, and also traceable to the Jātaka of the Theravādins. Therefore, we can only partially agree with him that there was Sanskrit Buddhist Hīnāyāna Buddhism in Dvāravatī. But to identify this Sanskrit Buddhist Hīnayāna as Sarvastivādins only is

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105Conversation with Professor Boisselier, Sept. 1988.

106The Kacchapajātaka figures in the bas-relief here is the version appear in the Jātakasatava, a work which cannot be identified to any school with certainty. See Sten Konow, (Jun 1940), Yuyama, (1983). Krairiksh uses this bas-relief particularly to support that this is not from Theravādins' Jātakas. But in the same light this is not from the Sarvastivadins' avadāna either.

107Strong, (1985), has written a highly informative concept of the formation of the Avadāna literature. The finally result such as the Avadānaśataka is a compilation which takes several hundred years. He connects the literature to Upagupta as its patron saint.

108Krairiksh, (1974), p. 21.

not true to the data. Here "Sanskrit Hīnayāna" has to be taken as schools of Hīnayāna, and not just the Sarvāstivādins. Moreover we cannot rule out Mahāyāna either. Since if we are to use a text as a principle to identify a school, some of these bas-reliefs are traceable to Mahāyāna works. Neither can we say that the Theravadins were not in the Dvāravatī tradition at that time.

These tales are probably the common heritage among the Buddhists. The compilers of the Jātaka may not have included some of them at the time the commentary on them was written, but this does not suggest that the Pāli tradition does not have those stories. The collection as we have now is not older than the fifth century and probably was not finalized until much later since the order and the number or even the names of the tales do not totally agree, even among the Theravāda collections of Sri Lanka, Burma, and Thailand.[109]

And again a stūpa such as the Chula Pathon does not have to belong exclusively to a school of Buddhism. These bas-reliefs show that they are inspired from different sources of different schools.[110] The stūpa stood as the central monument for the city; any Buddhists could have access to the stūpa. The Theravādins probably would never object to the depicting of the Buddhist stories drawn from other sources even if the stūpa was in their monastery ground. Hence we have texts such as the Paññāsajātaka,[111] Tamnan Mulasasana etc., in which appear

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[109]The number, names as well as order of the Jātaka stories are varied among the collection of these countries. See Luce, (1956), pp. 296 ff., for examples of variants in terms of name, there are at least a hundred. Luce, however, regarded them as scribal errors, but he also gives a list of names of which difference cannot be assigned to scribal error in p. 301. There are also three Jātakas which are not found in the Sri Lanka version.

[110]If we were to identify all these great stūpas to a specific school, we would have a very difficult time to study a stūpa such as Barabudur, since figure among its bas-reliefs are texts from several schools such as the Mahākarmavibhanga, Jatakas and Avadānas of different sources, Gaṇḍavyūha.

[111]See Jaini, (1980, 1983). Also see Norman, (1983), pp. 177-179. He says "It has already been noted that the Pāli Jātaka collection is by no means complete, and stories not included in that collection can be found elsewhere in the Pāli canon and also in Buddhist Sanskrit literature. There is also a collection of 50 Jātaka stories current in South-East Asia, generally referred to as "apocryphal" because they are not canonical."

stories from the traditions other than Pāli. That the stories from the non-Pāli sources which do not really show definite Mahāyāna influence are depicted in a stūpa does not rule out either the possibility of the prominence of the Theravāda Buddhism or the existence of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the Dvāravatī culture.

The suggestion about Sanskrit being used on the seal probably has no connection to a sect of Buddhism here. Since there has been a tendency to use Sanskrit as the royal or official language in the whole Southeast Asia in general. Even when Burma was converted to Theravāda Buddhism, Aniruddha's donation inscriptions were still written in a quasi-Sanskrit. Since it is obvious that it was the Brāhman and not monks who advised the king in the matter of administration, the language used thus betrays affinity to Sanskrit.

Relations between epigraphical and archaeological data

So far it is evident that inscriptions especially those in the quotation type are not just accidentally written down but rather intentionally created for an edifice such as a stūpa. These "quotation inscriptions", in a sense, do not have a function as the royal or the donation ones. They have to be considered as a text, or even a manuscript since they are copied from an original text.

Among the texts quoted, the ye dharmā stanza is the most popular one. It appears in both Pāli and Sanskrit, in southern Indian and northern Indian scripts. The tradition has persisted until the late ninth century. The other texts which have close relation with the stanza are the Pratītyasamutpāda and the Aryasatya. The "ye dharmā" stanza can be considered the shortest form of the Pratītyasamutpāda. The first half is the cause of all dharmas (samudayavāra), the latter is the cessation of them (nirodhavāra). In the same sense the Four Noble Truths are a form of the Pratītyasamutpāda, the first two Truths being the cause of the world, the last two, the

cessation. Hence there is a close relation among these three quotations. They are more frequently quoted than others.

It is probably suitable to note here that the stanza 'ajñānāc cīyate' also carries the same import as the Pratītyasamutpāda.

These stanzas are mostly found in the stūpa. The most popular one is the "ye dharmā" stanza. It is inscribed on bricks or gold plate and is found in any of several locations: buried within a stūpa, inscribed on the outside of a stūpa or on the bricks used for building the stūpa, at the base of an image, or on a votive tablet. In relation with the stūpa the text is probably meant to be a relic, but not the traditional three types of relics which we know from the canonical text. It has been designated as Dharmadhātu and the stūpa or any object on which it is inscribed would then become Dharmacetiya. Some scholars go so far as to identify it with the concept of Dharmakāya in the Mahāyāna theory of Trikāya.[112] We shall return to this presently.

This type of practice, that is to say, setting a text in the stūpa is not foreign to the Indian and Sri Lankan traditions. In Sri Lanka, Paranavitana followed by Dohanian thinks that the practice was introduced by the Mahāyānist, reasoning on the plaques inscribed with Sanskrit texts found in Indikutasāya and Vijirārāma, dated later than the eighth century as follows:

> The plaques at Indikutasāya and Vijiyārāma show that the Buddhists of Ceylon, especially those with Mahāyānistic leanings, had the practice of depositing, in caityas, metal plates on which were inscribed short extracts from the Sanskrit Buddhist writings. Their purpose is explained in a passage in the Saddharma-ratnākara. The 13th chapter of this work informs us that King Kassapa- which of the five who bore this name, it is not expressly stated- increased the height of the Abhayagirivihāra to 140 cubits and deposited the Dharmmadhātu therein. Later in the chapter, the author includes the dhammacetiya among the five different kinds of stūpas. By this term he evidently meant a tope built to enshrine fragment from the Dhamma (the sacred texts). The examples found in Indikatusāya and Vajirārāma are small

[112]Paranavitana, (1928), pp. 37 ff.

> and disconnected fragments and would bear the same relation to the whole body of the Dhamma as a small relic of the Buddha's body does to the corporeal frame. We have seen above that the Mahāyānists held that the Buddha had three bodies of which the Dharmmakāya or the body of the law was the most important; and the earthly body, the Nirmānakāya, to which belonged the relics enshrined in the early stūpas, was the least. To the mind of the average man the Dharmmakāya must have been represented by the written words of the Buddha, and the fragments of these would very well called Dharmmadhātu and enshrined in the stūpas instead of bodily relics. This way of reasoning must have been particularly welcome at the time when the zeal for building the stūpas was unbounded while the supply of the bodily relics of the Buddha must have necessarily been limited. It is probable that this extension of the veneration at first paid to bodily relic of the Buddha to metal fragments on which words attributed to him were written was due to the influence of the Mahāyāna conception of the three bodies.[113]

The original idea of enshrined texts might well originate from the Mahāyāna since we have evidence that Mahāyānists are concerned with the copying of a text and always emphasize its importance.[114] However, the tendency is not totally absent from the Theravāda of Sri Lanka and other sects in the Indian subcontinent. And the practice seems to have been popular well before the eighth century, the earliest date for the evidences of this practice in Sri Lanka.[115] In India, the "ye dharmā" inscription in Pāli with some trace of Sanskrit spelling (the two words that are Sanskrit are prabhavā and mahāśramaṇa) is found among the ruin of the stūpa in Sārnāth and is datable epigraphically in the second century A.D.[116] There is an example from Cambodia dated around seventh century that betrays the same characteristics as the one found in Sārnāth but this time the only Sanskrit word is prabhavā. In Southeast

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[113]Ibid., p. 44.

[114]Schopen, (1975).

[115]Dohanian, (1977), pp. 20 ff.

[116]*ARASI*, (1908), p. 74.

Asia it is obvious that the enshrining of the texts in both Pāli and Sanskrit is evident at the latest from the fourth or fifth century A.D. onward.

In Sri Lanka the first dispute among monks is about the supremacy between the study of the text and the practice, the studying of the text being finally honored over the other.[117] This reveals that the text is considered to be very important even among the monks who do not have Mahāyānistic leaning. And the practice of setting a text in the stūpa is not done exclusively with the Sanskrit text or Mahāyāna text, instead the texts used are common to all other sects. In view of the śarīradhātu being rare, the Dharma is a very convenient source to consecrate a stūpa.

On this point Paranavitana seems to have suggested that since the Dharmakāya is superior to the Nirmāṇakāya, the enshrining of the text would be preferred to the bodily relics. However, the text does not replace or have the supremacy over the bodily relics. If the bodily relics can be acquired, it is always preferred. This fact holds true also in the Mahāyāna practice. In some cases the bodily relics and the textual relics are found together.[118]

As for the interpretation of the stūpa with a text as the Dharmakāya, a cosmic form of the Buddha forwarded by Paranavitana, the practice among the Theravāda tradition does not seem to be in accordance with that concept. In fact the word Dharmakāya is used in the canon in a sense of the Doctrine or in an extended sense, the text. The usage persists in the Mahāyāna texts too, for instances, the beginning stanza of the Bodhicāryāvatāra and the content of the Dharmaśarīrasūtra.[119] Moreover, the concept of Dharmadhātu is not really foreign to the Pāli canon either.

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117 Dohanian, (1977), p. 3.

118 Conversation with Professor Lancaster, Sept 1989.

119 For reference to the Dharmaśarīra, see R. E. Emmerick, (1979), pp. 20-21. Part of the remaining text is published by Bongard-Levin in *IIJ*, (1969), pp. 269-280. The text appears to be a list of important texts, the teaching, which are regarded as the Dharmakāya.

The Pratītyasamutpāda is called Dhammaṭhiti, Dhammadhātu, Dhammaniyāma etc., as the principle of all dharmas.[120] It is not surprising that we find the shortest form of the Pratītyasamutpāda, the "ye dharmā" stanza, as the most popular text being interred in the stūpa.[121]

Therefore, in the Theravāda tradition the stūpa or an object with the inscription quoted from a text is just a Dharmacetiya in an ordinary sense, and not the cosmic body of the Buddha. The reference about the introduction of the text called Dharmadhātu which has been labelled as Mahāyānistic does not in any case mention the relation between this text and the concept of the enshrining of a text in the stūpa. What was rejected by the orthodoxy of Sri Lanka is not the practice of enshrining the text but that the text is a Mahāyāna text. The practice therefore is not unique to the Mahāyānists and does not have to originate from the Mahāyāna. And certainly it is not "the extension of the veneration at first paid to bodily relics of the Buddha to the metal fragments on which words attributed to him were written was due to the influence of the Mahāyāna conception of the three bodies",[122] as Paranavitana asserts. Of course, the concept of the three bodies is evidently popular among the Mahāyānists in Sri Lanka, but this does not mean that this doctrine has any real connection to the cult of enshrining the texts in the stūpas. Evidently even the author of the Saddharmma-ratnākāra does not draw any connection between the practice and the doctrine of three bodies.

The other object found inscribed with texts is Dharmacakra. As we have said above that cakra is an ancient symbol appropriated by the Buddhists and more or less exclusively used in Buddhism. Two texts have been found inscribed on the cakra, the

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[120]DN. II: 8; SN II: 143 ff., etc.

[121]See Yuyama, (1971).

[122]Paranavitana, (1938), p. 45.

Four Noble Truths and the Pratītyasamutpāda. In the first case, the cakra becomes the symbol of the First Sermon, the Dharmacakrapravartanasūtra, the Dharmacakra. In the second case, the cakra stands for Bhavacakra.

All these objects of worship, the stūpa, image, votive tablet, Dharmacakra, are also closely interrelated since they are always found in the same location. Images are found set in the alcoves at the base of a stūpa. Votive tablets are usually interred in the stūpa together with the "quotation inscriptions". Dharmacakra set on a post is always erected in front of the stūpa. All of these objects form a complex system of symbols in Southeast Asian Buddhism.

Pattern and development of Southeast Asian Buddhism

It is a common practice to label Buddhism in Southeast Asia as Theravāda or Mahāyāna, using the languages in the inscriptions or archaeological data which have been identified by art historians as Theravāda or Mahāyāna. This is an over-simplification.

Let us take the case of languages first. Any document using Pāli has been labelled as belonging to the Theravādin tradition, occasionally even narrowed down to the Theravādin of Sri Lanka only. Those in Sanskrit, if it does not show real influence of the Mahāyāna Buddhism, have been assigned as belonging to the Sarvāstivādin.[123]

Now in the case of Pāli, since it is used only in the Theravāda tradition, the situation seems to be more secure.[124] However, in India, the language used in inscriptions of other sects found in the Andhra area around third to fourth century is very similar to Pāli.[125] The difference is on the orthographical point or in the

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[123]See de Casparis, (1956), p. 69. N. Ray, (1936), Krairiksh, (1974), for this type of reasoning.

[124]For the problems concerning the origin and the development of Pāli see Bechert, (1980); Norman, (1983), pp. 1-14; (1989), pp. 29-54.

[125]See supra footnote 67 of this chapter.

epigraphical convention of that time, for instance: the omission of double consonants or long vowels.

Nevertheless, the convention does not seem to carry on in the Pāli inscriptions found in Southeast Asia; they are written in standard Pāli. This fact seems to indicate that Pāli used in the region does belong to the Theravāda, and most probably to the Theravāda of Sri Lanka. However, it is worth mentioning here that in India, there are evidences that Pāli was still in use even in the Pāla period. A votive tablet of the Pāla style evidently imported from India found in a stūpa in Thailand is inscribed with the ye dharmā stanza in Pāli.[126]

In the case of Sanskrit which has become the lingua franca of India, it is more widely used than Pāli, hence, it is by no means limited to the Sarvāstivādins. Sanskrit has made its impact felt in Buddhism rather early for we can see the trend of Sanskritized Prakrit in Buddhism. The languages used in the Buddhist texts seem to become more and more Sanskritic in the course of time. Even Pāli has not escaped this trend.[127] The Mahāvastu of the Mahāsanghika Lokottaravādin is written in Buddhist Sanskrit. Mahāyāna texts are all in more or less standard Sanskrit.

Therefore, we cannot agree with Ray, who in his book *Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma*, uses the "ye dharmā" inscriptions in Sanskrit to assert that Sanskrit Buddhism in Burma was Sarvāstivādin. We have pointed out above that not only Sarvāstivādin use Sanskrit. The "ye dharmā" in Sanskrit version remains popular and is evident in the Mahāyāna tradition. The data is too meager to pinpoint the sect to which they belong. To make the issue more complicated the Theravādin of the Abhayagirivihāra has been reported using Sanskrit side by side with Pāli and was at

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[126]This is an inscription at the back of a votive tablet depicting the Eight Great Episodes of the Buddha's life. The style is definitely Pāla. The language is Pāli, and the script is Devanāgarī. See *IT*, V: 231-220.

[127]See Norman, (1983, 1989).

one time the center of Mahāyāna as well as the Theravāda.[128] Therefore, Sanskrit texts which have been found in Southeast Asia could come from Sri Lanka too. And in this case we have more confusion caused by the term "Theravāda", since the Abhayagirivihāravāsins, even they had the open-minded attitude toward the doctrine of Mahāyāna, were still considered as belonging to the Theravādins of Sri Lanka. Thus, if we have a stanza in Sanskrit of a Buddhist text, we have at least three options for schools, the Sarvāstivādins, the Mahāyānaists, and the Abhayagirivihāra-vāsins of the Theravādins in Sri Lanaka.

Now let us return to the art objects and the art style. There is a tendency to interpret the art objects with northern Indian style as belonging to Mahāyāna school and the southern style to the Hīnayāna or sometimes even the Theravāda.[129] This is probably the most dangerous practice, for the style does not have to attach itself to a sectarian division. If we identify every Buddha image in the vajrāsana as an image in Mahāyāna, we shall have to identify every Burmese image, evidently production of the Theravāda inspiration, as Mahāyāna.

Even in the case that images such as Buddha are found in a sanctuary which is labelled as Mahāyāna due to its plan and motive, we still cannot be sure that those images are exclusively of Mahāyāna inspiration for the Mahāyāna has never rejected iconographical tradition of Hīnayāna Buddhism. Most of these sanctuaries have gone through several renovations and alterations in accordance with the preference of the time. They were at one time Hīnayāna and then Mahāyāna or even Hindu. Thus, the images and motives cannot really be used in identifying a sanctuary as Theravāda or Mahāyāna. It is common to find objects belonging to both traditions in the same area. Moreover, images of Hinduism are also found in the same place. The situation is thus

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[128]Paranavitana, (1928).

[129]See for examples Aiyappan, (1960), pp. 74-75. Na Paknam,

very complex, a sanctuary can be Hindu and Buddhist at the same time.[130] To pinpoint differences among the Buddhists themselves is even more difficult.

As for the stūpas, some scholars have tried to connect the cult of building big stūpas to the Caityaka.[131] However, this cult is not particular to the Caityaka. In the area of the great stūpas such as Amarāvatī and Nāgājunikonda there was more than one sect residing near the area. At Bodhgayā, monasteries of different sects from different countries were built to accommodate the pilgrims. This fact indicates that the stūpa of that scale is a public monument, not belonging to one particular sect. This holds true for the stūpa in Southeast Asia. This probably is the answer to the situation which seems to point to the conflict between epigraphical and archaeological data such as the case of the Chula Pathon Cedi where we have stories from sources other than Pāli. It was a public treasure any sect could participate in decorating and venerating the stūpa. What we have just appears to be those of other Hīnayāna sects or even Mahāyāna, but this does not by any means suggest that the Theravādins were not present in the area.

Therefore all these sources and data have to be used carefully. A few lines of inscription in Pāli or Sanskrit cannot assure us that Buddhism in the area where it is found was Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda or Mahāyāna, unless it is supported by other evidences.[132] Remains of buildings or stūpas which yield data such as images which

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[130]See for examples Filliozat, (1981), p. 73. The impediment of an Uposatha Hall is usually decorated by Brahmanical gods such as Brahma and Viṣṇu. And it is common enough to find Śivalinga in a monastery ground in Thailand.

[131]See P. R. Srinivasan in Aiyappan, (1960), p. 59. "In view of the fact that Buddhists who migrated from North India and settled in Andhradesa built huge stūpas and called them mahachaityas and perpetuated their worship, they came to be distinguished as the Chaityakas." He does not given any reference to substantiate his statement. We find the building of stūpas of other schools recorded in inscriptions and they were called mahācaitya too.

[132]N. Ray of course being a great scholar uses other evidence such as the scripts and Chinese source to support his theory. But the scripts of the north or the south of India are equalled used in recording both Pāli and Sanskrit. The Chinese source which records the existence of the Sarvāstivādins in Magadha also gives information on other schools flourishing at the same time. So far the evidence is far too scanted to say anything definite.

cannot clearly be connected to any sect should not be designated as belonging to one particular sect.

Epigraphically it appears that in the Pyu and the Dvāravatī traditions Buddhism particularly that which used Pāli, presumably the Theravādin was predominant. In Khmer tradition and in Indonesia, the inscriptions from sixth to seventh century A.D., even they are written in Sanskrit, do not really show the particular sign of Mahāyāna Buddhism. From the eighth century A.D. onward there appeared strong waves of Mahāyāna influence in the archipelago and in the Khmer mandala and subsequently in the central part of Thailand which was under the Dvāravatī culture. In the latter case the Theravāda held firm side by side with the Mahāyāna.[133]

The Mon area of south Burma which is believed to be the area where the mission of the third council had landed does not yield many data of Buddhism, only one Buddha image in Gupta style is reported found in Thaton.[134] The rest of the

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[133]S. Vallibhotama, (1986), pp. 229 ff. He is of the opinion that it was Mahāyāna from Khmer tradition that bring various centers and states into close contact. This is probably because Mahāyāna has been used for administrative purpose in the Khmer tradition. As we have seen that the Khmer from the ninth century onward had organized to be a great mandala, and thus had a considerable centralized polity. The Thai later took this concept, using not Mahāyāna, but Theravāda. At any rate Theravāda was not supplanted by Mahāyāna, since they were both recognized by the king.

[134]See Snellgrove, (1978), pp. 146 ff. We find a description, probably by Boisselier, on this issue as follows:

> ..Yet the Thaton region has yielded no indication of the existence of local workshops or of images comparable in antiquity with the vestiges found on the site of the former Prome. This absence of any genuinely ancient evidence raises a problem that has been stressed by most authors. While we are unable to suggest a possible explanation, we would at least emphasized that a bronze statue (Pl. 101), undeniably in Gupta style, is of very special interest. Beyond aii doubt imported, it suggests that, in the region where the Theravāda schools was the most firmly established, iconography underwent a regeneration that is comparable to that observed in the Pyu country and due to the same influences; the newly introduced Gupta style seems at first to have existed side by side with the original school in the Andhra tradition, and then have gradually ousted it.

We agree with the description in case of Pyu that the Gupta finally supersedes the Andhra style. But the same statement cannot be applied to the case of Thaton. First, we do not have any other image which is in the Andhra style or any local image that would be transformed into the Gupta style. Second, neither can one agree, due to the paucity of data, that Thaton, a place without much trace of Buddhism, was "the region

archaeological finds are of brahmanical nature.[135] In the area north of the Pyu mandala, the religion seems to be that of Naga cult, and later on Tantric Buddhism from the northeast of India reached there by the land route.[136]

We do not know when the Tantric Buddhism arrived in Burma, but it is evident that it was flourishing at around the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D. The period preceded the acceptance of Theravāda Buddhism by Aniruddha of Pagan. The cult is called Ari in Burma. Some of the practice seems similar to a kind of Buddhism in Cambodia reported by Chou Ta Koun who came to Cambodia in the thirteenth century A.D.[137]

Therefore we can draw the line that in terms of Buddhism the Theravāda was the main sect in the Pyu and the Dvāravatī cultures and the Mahāyāna in the Khmer area and the archipelago. However, this does not rule out the presence of other Hīnayāna sects and the Mahāyānists in the Pyu and the Dvāravatī traditions. Neither does it mean that there was no Theravāda or Hīnayāna in Khmer mandala and in the archipelago.

Because of the fact that the data on Buddhism and Brahmanism are always presenting themselves in a state of co-existence, a question arises in our mind whether the issue concerning sects was important in Southeast Asian context at all. Since we find object of arts mixing between sects and even mixing with those of Hinduism. The same probably can be said of the situation in India and Sri Lanka. The picture we have in mind is probably contorted by the texts dealing with the dissention into different sects which are much studied by western scholars.

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where the Theravada school was the most firmly established." The statement fits only to the case of the Pyu, and not Thaton.

[135] N. Ray, (1932).

[136] Luce, (1969), p. 18; Micheal Aung-Thwin, (1985), p. 32; Spiro, (1967).

[137] See Duroiselle, (1915-16), pp. 79-93.

Epigraphical and archaeological data about these sects do not suggest the real separation among them. They, Hīnayānists and Mahāyānists, seem to have lived in the same area and even in the same monastery.[138] In the Buddhist universities such as Nālanda and Vikramaśila monks of different sects must have resided together. The support from the laymen was not limited to one particular sect either for we find inscriptions of a king who supported at least two sects at the same time.[139] The parallel situation in Southeast Asia is amply supported by inscriptions quoted above.

We have some information concerning sects of Buddhism in Southeast Asia recorded by Chinese pilgrims. The account given has been used as contemporary evidence to figure out which schools of Buddhism existing in Southeast Asia. However, the information recorded in these works usually are not first hand information. Therefore, we have to be careful in using these materials. Information

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[138]See Takakusu, (1896), pp. 14 ff. I Jing tells us a very informative story on this matter:

> King Bimbisāra once saw in a dream that a piece of cloth was torn, and gold stick broken, both into eighteen fragments.
> Being frightened, he asked the Buddha the reason. In reply the Buddha said : 'More than a hundred years after my attainment of Nirvāṇa, there will arise a king, named Aśoka, who will rule over the whole Jambudvīpa. At that time, my teaching handed down by several Bhikshua will be split into eighteen schools, all agreeing, however, in the end, that is to say, all attaining the goal of Final Liberation (Moksha). The dream foretells this, O king, you need not be afraid!'
> Which of the four schools should be grouped with the Mahāyāna or with the Hīnayāna is not determined.
> In Northern India and in the islands of the Southern Sea, they generally belong to the Hīnayāna, while those in China devote themselves to the Mahāyāna; in other places, some practise in accordance with one, some with other. Now let us determine what they pursue. Both adopt one and the same discipline (Vinaya), and they have in common the prohibitions of the five skandhas ('groups of offences'), and also the practice of the Four Noble Truths.
> Those who worship the Bodhisattvas and read the Mahāyana sūtras are called the Mahāyānists (the Great), while those who do not perform these are called the Hīnayānists (the Small).

Interestingly enough the *Abhidharmadīpa*, a work of the Sarvāstivādins defends that they too worship the Bodhisattvas, not just the Mahayanists. The Theravādins would probably defend themselves in the same way.

[139]See *EI*, XX, 1929-1930, pp. 16-17, and compare with pp. 165-166. The first one, a royal member supports the Aparaseliyas, the second, probably the grandmother of the person in the first, supports the Mahīśāsakas. Both refer to a king in the Ikṣvāku dynasty. An inscription of the Theravādins also praises the king of this dynasty as supporting them., see the same volume, pp. 22 ff.

relating to the places they had visited is more reliable than those gathered from hearsay. Reporting on the religious situation of Southeast Asia, I Jing wrote:

> At the (eastern) extremity there is the so-called 'Great Black' Mountain, which is, I think, on the southern boundary of Tu-fan(Tibet). This mountain is said to be on the south-west of Shu-Chuan (Ssu-Chuan), from which one can reach this mountain after the journey of a month or so. Southward from this, and close to the sea-coast there is a country called Śrīkshetra(Prome); on the southeast of this Lankāsu(probably Kāmalankā); on the east of this is Dvā(ra)patī (Dvāravatī, Ayudhya [Takakusu is wrong here]); at the extreme east, Lin-i (Champa). The inhabitants of all these countries greatly reverence the Three Jewels (Ratnatraya). There are many who firmly to the precepts and perform the begging dhūta which constitutes a custom in these countries. Such (persons) exist in the West (India) as I have witnessed, who are indeed different from men of ordinary character.
>
> In the islands of the Southern Sea- consisting of more than ten countries- the Mūlasarvāstivādanikāya has been almost universally adopted (lit., 'there is almost only one'), though occasionally themselves to the Sammitinikāya; and recently a few followers of the other two schools have also been found. ...
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> ..... Setting out from Kwan-chou...... and proceeding still southwards one arrives at Champa, i.e. Lin-i.
>
> In this country Buddhists generally belong to the Aryasammitinikāya, and there are also a few followers of the Sarvāstivādanikāya.
>
> Setting out south-westwards, one reaches (on foot) within a month, Poh-nan(Kuo), formerly called Fu-nan. Of old it was a country, the inhabitants of which lived naked; the people were mostly mostly worshippers of heaven (the gods or devas), and later on, Buddhism flourished there, but a wicked king has now expelled and exterminated them all, while adherents of other religions (or heretics) live intermingled. The region is the south corner of Jambudvīpa (India), and is not one of the islands of the sea.[140]

From this, we learn very little about Buddhism or schools of Buddhism in the mainland region. One thing is clear; I Jing did not mention any schools when he

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[140]Takakusu, (1896), pp. 9 ff.

described Buddhism in the mainland. If it were mainly Sarvāstivāda or Sammatiya, he would not have failed to mention them. In this case the assertion that Buddhism in Pyu and Dvāravatī were that of the Sarvāstivādins finds no support either in the inscriptions or in the Chinese records.

And I Jing was wrong in case of Funan or the Khmer since epigraphical data dated around the time the record was written tell us that Buddhism was flourishing side by side with Hinduism.[141] The account of the archipelago probably is more accurate, but epigraphical and archaeological data are not enough to verify whether the main sect in the insular region was the Sarvāstivādin or not. So far we have some quotation inscriptions in Sanskrit which do not have the real indication that they are Mahāyānistic. However, in line with the precaution mentioned above they cannot be assigned without any reservation to the Sarvāstivādin. I Jing is probably right that Mahāyāna has not yet attained its supremacy in the seventh century A.D., the real data on Mahāyāna in this area are all in the eighth century A.D. onward.[142]

According to the data, Theravāda has continued to be the main creed in the Pyu and Dvāravatī, that is to say the central Burma and most of present Thailand. The oldest evidences are inscriptions in Pāli dating from around the fourth century A.D. at the earliest. Inscriptions in Pāli have been continuously in use in this region especially in Burma and Thailand until the nineteenth century.

For a long time, history of Buddhism in the Pyu and the Dvāravatī traditions has been labelled as Hīnayāna, but not the Pāli Buddhism. The origin of this Buddhism, even in the case that it uses Pāli in its canonical texts, is said to be South India and not Sri Lanka which would not come into the scene until the twelfth century.

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[141] K. Bhattacharya, (1961), pp. 27 ff.

[142] de Casparis, (1956), p. 70.

These misconceptions were probably started by Blagden who thought that Pyu people mainly professed to Hinduism with a mixture of the Sarvāstivāda Buddhism.[143] These were followed by Finot and to some extent N. Ray. Even modern works such as Michael Aung-Thwin's *Pagan* and Emmanuel Guillon's article 'Jalons pour une histoire du Bouddhisme en Asie du Sud-Est,' still blindly follow these ideas, saying that Buddhism in Pyu and Dvāravatī was of the Sarvāstivādins.[144] All these have been proved wrong by both epigraphical and archaeological data.

N. Ray has pinpointed the original place of Pāli Buddhism found in the Pyu mandala as South India. He does not specify the region denoted by 'South India'. The term has been taken to refer to different extents of territory. Some use it as comprising the whole area south of central India, while some use it in the narrow sense, the area not further than the thirteenth degree north. This latter usage comprises the area where the Pallava, Pandya and the Chola were to be chief power successively.

Apparently, N. Ray takes the word in the narrow sense:

> ..the source from where this Buddhism was fed and nourished was evidently the Andhra-Kuntala-Pallava region of Deccan and South India, from such centres as Amarāvatī, Nāgārjunikonda, Kāñcīpuram, Kāvaripattanam and Uragapuram where Theravāda Buddhism during these centuries had established famous and flourishing strongholds. .. ... It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that Theravāda Buddhism which Burma today is of Sinhalese form was originally introduced not from Ceylon but from the Decccan and South India, where in the time of the celebrated pilgrim I-ching (671–95) 'all followed the Sthavīra nikāya though there existed a few adherents of other nikāyas also.' .... Infact it seems that it was not till the middle of the twelfth century that Ceylon came to play any important role in the history of Buddhism in Burma.'[145]

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[143]See Blagden, (Jun 1912).

[144]Micheal Aung-Thwin, (1985), p. 17; and Guillon, (1984), pp. 123-124.

[145]N. Ray, (1946), p. 45.

N. Ray is concerned with only Theravāda Buddhism in Burma. But since we have shown above that the situation concerning Theravāda Buddhism was more or less the same in Dvāravatī, his assumption, if valid, should be applied to both regions. We agree with him in the point that Theravāda Buddhism, and actually other sects too, should come to Southeast Asia from the Deccan area. But it is not certain that it only came from South India. And his assertion that Sri Lanka did not play any role until the twelfth century is quite groundless for several reasons.

First, Theravāda Buddhism was flourishing in Sri Lanka at the same time as in the Andhra region. South India does not yield any data on Buddhism until later. The only source on Buddhism in South India is the Manimekhalai which seems to be very late, at least not earlier that the fifth century A.D., since the author knew Dharmakīrti, the famous Buddhist logician of the fifth century.[146] Epigraphically the so-called Pallava scripts used in these Pāli inscriptions have the particulars in common with those used in Sri Lanka. Archaeologically, the images said to be Amarāvatī reveal influence of the Anurādhapura as well as the Gupta styles.

Second, the record given by the Chinese pilgrims concerning the Sthavīra nikāya is repeated in the case of Sri Lanka.

Third, Sri Lanka has maintained close relations with Andhra and South India. We find, in the vicinity of Nāgārjunikonda, inscriptions, dated around third and fourth centuries, of the Theravādin deserved to quote here:

[146]See Paula Richman, (1988), pp. 160 ff. and the footnotes on pp. 237-239. For Buddhism in South India see Aiyappan, (1960) (numerous statements in this book seem to be groundless); also K. Indrapala, (1981); B. C. Law, (1931); C. Minakshi, (1978); Xavier S, Thani Nayagam, (Oct-Dec 1959); K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, (Nov. 1959).

> Success! Adoration to the lord Buddha...... For the benefit of the...Theriyas of the fraternities (of Bhikṣu) of Tambapamna (Ceylon) who have converted Kashmir, Gandhāra, Chīna, Chilāta, Tosali, Avaramta, Vanga, Vanavāsi, Yavana, Damila, Pulara and the Isle of Tambapamni...[147]

> Let there be success! The pair of feet of the Lord (i.e. the Buddha) has been installed, with the prayer for the welfare and happiness of all beings, in the monastery of the teachers, the Theriyas (i.e. Theravadins) Vibhajjavāda; who causes delight to (i.e. converted to the Buddhist doctrine) (the people of) Kaśmīra, Gandhāra, Yavana, Vanavāsa and Tambapamnidīpa; who are residing in the Great Monastery (the Mahāvihāravāsins) who are expert in the determination of the meaning and the words of the nine members of the teaching of the Buddha; and who uphold the tradition of the Noble lineage[148]

This shows not only that the Sri Lankan Theravāda was present there, but also that it propagated the faith all over India, if we are to believe the account of the inscription. The relations between Sri Lanka and South India were not always good, an aspect much overemphasized. New data depict a different picture. At least, the Sangha of both areas were closely related.[149] Monks from South India came to study

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[147]*EI*, XX, pp. 22 ff. The inscription is dated by Shizutani as A.D. 250-275. Vogel translates the word 'theriyānaṃ' as 'master'. Dutta, (1939), thinks that it should be translated as the senior nuns (bhikśuṇī). However, if we compare with the next inscription, the word 'theriyānaṃ' is qualified with 'mahavihāravāsinaṃ'. If it is 'therī = senior Bhikṣuṇī', it should be qualified with 'mahāvihāravāsininām.' Vogel is correct in translating it as 'masters', it might mean the Theravādins.

> (l.1) Sidhaṃ namo bhagavato..... Kasmira-Gaṃdhāra-Chīna-Chilāta-Tosali-Avaraṃta-Vaṃga-Vanavasi-Yavana-Da[mila-Pa]lura Taṃbapaṃni-dipa-pasādikānaṃ theriyānaṃ Taṃbapaṃnakānaṃ suparigahe...

Interestingly enough that China is mentioned here as converted by the Tambapannakas. Suvarṇabhūmi never appears in the list of both inscriptions (see below.) And also note that they call themselves Tambapannakas, rather than Theravādins. The term 'Tambapannakas', and not Theravādins, is also used in Mahāyana text to refer to the Sangha of Sri Lanka. (See footnote 150 of this chapter.)

[148]*EI*, XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 250. The inscription is dated by the editor as third century A.D. The translation of Sircar seems misleading. He translates 'attha' as 'meaning', but 'vyajana' as 'implication'; and also 'ariyavamsapavenidharanam' as 'who know the traditions of the (four) classes of (Buddhist) recluses by heart.' The translation given is mine. The text runs as follows:

> 1. Sidhaṃ āchariyanaṃ theriyānaṃ Vibhaj-vādānaṃ Kasmira-Gaṃdhāra-Yavana-Vanavāsa-Taṃbapaṃnidipa-pasādakanaṃ
> 2. Mahāvihāra-vāsinaṃ nava[ṃ] ga Sathu-sasana-atha-vjayana-vinichhaya-visaradanaṃ ariya-va[ṃ] sa-paveni-dharanaṃ
> 3. vihāre Bhagavato pāda-saṃghāḍā nipatiṭhapito sava-satānaṃ hita-sukh-athanāya ti.

[149]See Dahonian, (1977), pp. 12 ff.

and work in Sri Lanka, among them the famous Dhammapāla. In both cases, Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla had to come to Sri Lanka because Buddhist texts in Sri Lanka were numerous and more complete than in India. Monks from Sri Lanka, especially the Mahāvihāravāsins, escaped the persecution and took shelter in South India.

Moreover, the Sri Lanka Sangha was also in close relation with the main stream of Buddhism in North India.[150] The tenet of Theravāda such as Bhavangacitta is recorded in Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa.[151] From the fourth and fifth centuries onward, Sri Lanka seems to have been the seat of Buddhist studies not just of the Theravāda but also Mahāyāna and Tantra, the fact supported by epigraphical, archaeological and the Chinese records.[152] Buddhism in Sri Lanka was always in touch with the trend in India. The war with Tamil power in the second century did not by any means disrupt its relation with India as Bareau has suggested. He thinks that the Theravāda of Sri Lanka preserves the ancient characteristic because of this disruption.[153] But data show that Sri Lanka was constantly affected by the situation in India and also contributes to the propagation of Buddhism at the same time.

N. Ray further remarks that there is nowhere any mention about the old kingdom of Burma in the Pāli chronicle and commentaries written around fifth, sixth

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[150]Dahonian, (1977), pp. 16-17; Norman, (1989), p. 41 and also footnote 70. He says "Despite the separation of the Sinhalese Buddhist from North India, it seems that literary material continued to reach Ceylon.." and in the footnote ; "The break between North India and Ceylon was clearly not an abrupt one, or even a complete one, for Theravādins continued to reside near Bodhgayā for some centuries. The fame of the Sinhalese commentaries was sufficiently widespread in North India to attract Buddhaghosa to Ceylon."

[151]Lamotte, (1935-36), p. 230:

> 35. Dans les sūtra du Tamraparṇīyanikāya, cette connaisance est nommée connaisance membre-d'existence (bhavaṅgavijñāna),..

[152]See Dahonian, (1977), chapter 2 and 3.

[153]André Bareau, (1955), p. 34.

and seventh centuries.[154] But there is nowhere any mention of a Southeast Asian kingdom in any literature of India either. Neither is the name Dvāravatī as a kingdom of Southeast Asia, considering that the same phenomenon that these Pāli inscriptions are also found in Dvāravatī, mentioned anywhere in the literature of India and Sri Lanka. In fact the mentioning of the name of countries in Southeast Asia is very rare. And most of the time when a place name is mentioned it is a generic name such as Suvarṇadvīpa, Dvīpāntara or Suvarṇabhūmi.

And finally his last remark is in conflict with his assertion that Buddhaghosa was a native of Burma.[155] Most of the commentaries written in the centuries mentioned above are written by him; how could he not have mentioned its name?

The decisive evidences to prove that Sri Lankan Buddhism plays an important role in the History of Buddhism in Southeast Asia are the inscriptions of the sixth century which mention the name Anurādhapura and the one which quoted from the Telakaṭāhagāthā, a work definitely composed in Sri Lanka. Therefore, Sri Lanka has to be treated as an integral part of India when we are dealing with the original place of Buddhism of Southeast Asia. We cannot deny that it might have come from the Deccan area, but neither can we negate the possibility of its coming from Sri Lanka. And certainly the statement that Sri Lanka did not come into this picture until the twelfth century is untenable.

Epigraphical and archaeological data force us to consider northern India as a source of Southeast Asian Buddhism too. The tradition of the "ye dharmā" inscriptions seems to have originated there. And those which are found in India do not follow the same epigraphical tradition, the omission of double consonants and long vowel, but they are in perfect standard Pāli and Sanskrit. There seems to be separate

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[154]N. Ray, (1946), p. 45.

[155]Ibid., pp. 24 ff.

traditions between epigraphy and manuscript. This trend was followed in creating such inscriptions in Southeast Asia. They are all written in standard orthography.

It may be asserted that the script used is always in the so-called Pallava script which is of the southern Indian origin. However, the adopting of the script does not have to be the restriction for accepting Buddhism from North India. We find the southern script used for recording Sanskrit, and northern script for recording Pāli.[156] And in the archipelago as well as in the mainland region to a lesser degree, the Pre-Devanāgarī and Nāgarī are also being used in inscription.[157]

This fact together with the influence of the Gupta and Pāla as well as Anurādhapura styles rather suggests that Ray has overemphasized the role of southern India as the only source for Southeast Asian Buddhism, especially the Theravāda. He seems to think that the Theravāda lost its hold in North India at a very early time.[158] This assumption contradicts both epigraphical and archaeological data, since we find inscriptions in Pāli as late as the Pāla period.

For the Sanskrit Buddhism which was evidently present in every area in Southeast Asia, Ray has assigned it to the Sarvāstivādin. However, we do not really possess any specific data for the matter. The Chinese record is very evasive about the sects in the mainland, but more definitive in the archipelago. It would seem to be too early to say that Sanskrit Buddhism in Southeast Asia was Sarvāstivāda by just the 'ye dharmā' inscription in Sanskrit. The inscriptions can belong to other Hīnayāna sects which use Sanskrit or even to the Mahāyāna tradition. At around that time the

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[156]See for examples *JRASMB*, (1940), Pl. 8, the script is of southern Indian, the language is Sanskrit. Compare with *IT*, V: 213 ff., the script is of northern India, and probably made in North India, but the language is Pāli.

[157]de Casparis, (1956).

[158]See also Norman, (1989), p. 70, and footnote 149 of this chapter.

Mahāsanghikas, who also use Sanskrit, were flourishing in Magadha, the area where Ray thinks that the Sarvāstivādins of Burma originate.

Now let us summarize the religious situation of Southeast Asia.
First we have evidences that canonical texts are quoted in inscription. We have to assume that there exists a corpus of the Pāli canon in the Pyu and Dvāravatī tradition at the latest before the fifth century A.D. The fact that the inscriptions are not the exact quotation such as the Ariyasacca inscription shows that they were intentionally compiled from several texts. The situation demands that they were in possession of the Pāli canon. There was also some knowledge about other Hīnayāna sects which due to the paucity of the data cannot yet be specified.

Evidences of Mahāyāna Buddhism starting from the eighth century A.D. have been found mainly in Khmer, Śailendra and Śrī Vijaya territories. And at one time it had penetrated into the Dvāravatī culture, but the old tradition continued to flourish. The school of Mahāyāna in the regions mentioned above seems to be that of the Yogācāra. Later on the Tantric Buddhism also reached Southeast Asia, but the influence seems to have been limited to Khmer and Central Java.

The regions north of the Pyu mandala which was to be the Pagan kingdom of Burma adhered to the local religion and later to a form of Tantra called Ari in Burmese until the Theravāda asserted itself in the area by the effort of the famous king Aniruddha. Data from the region to the south reveal that the prominent faith was Hinduism, probably the Vaiṣaṇava. This area, which was to be reported by the Mon and Burmese sources as the seat of the Theravāda Buddhism from which Aniruddha relied on for introducing the Theravāda to Pagan, seems to have received the Buddhist influence from the Dvāravatī tradition.

The fact that we find evidences such as Sīmā in both epigraphical and archaeological data shows that the Vinaya rules had been observed as well as

activities which require the boundary for voting were performed. It is thus definitely confirmed that Buddhism was an established religion in Southeast Asia.

Epigraphical data, especially those of Dvāravatī tradition, reveal that Buddhism was also the religion of the masses in that tradition. And it is also evident that there was some elite movement since the texts selected and quoted seem to be the works of scholars. The idea of inscribing the Four Noble Truth and the Pratītyasamutpāda on the Dharmacakra also points toward the academic study of Buddhism in the Dvāravatī culture.

But it should not be forgotten that the cult of enshrining texts in the stūpa has to be treated separately from the study of texts in the strict sense. The masses could very well participate in this cult. The bas-reliefs depicting the life of Buddha, Jātaka and Avadāna suggest that the masses must have some knowledge about those stories. The popular practices seem to be similar to those in India described by Chinese pilgrims which appear to be common to all Buddhist countries, the building of stūpas, vihāras, giving provisions to monks, casting Buddha images, venerating the images, the footprint of the Buddha etc. They cannot be said to be Theravāda or Mahāyāna.

In every part of Southeast Asia where Buddhism was present, Hinduism also existed side by side. They seem to be in harmony rather than discordance. In the inscriptions of the Khmer mandala where Hinduism especially the Śaiva must have been the state religion, the synthesis between the two was cleariy depicted- a Paśupāta priest is said to study Buddhism, images of both faiths were cast and enshrined in the same place by the same patronage.

We therefore can permit ourselves to conclude that Buddhism: Theravāda, other Hīnayāna schools, Mahāyāna as well as Tantra, were present in Southeast Asia. The Theravāda school seems to be strong in the Pyu and Dvāravatī, and the

Mahāyāna in the Khmer and the traditions of the peninsula and the archipelago. There was also synthesis between Buddhism and Hinduism. What then permits this peacefully co-existent situation of different religions and schools? The question to be considered next is why and how it arrived at this regional division, to what extent the synthesis was achieved, what and how this division and the synthesis affect Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

CHAPTER 5

PERCEPTIONS TOWARD RELIGION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

In studying the religious situation in Southeast Asia problems which always crop up in our mind are those concerning the indigenous beliefs and their relation to the new religions from India. Before we can understand the relations between the indigenous beliefs and the Indian ones, we have to determine what they are. The relations among the Indian religions in Southeast Asia have been partly dealt with in the previous chapter. We have found, according to the epigraphical and the archaeological data, that there seemed to be a line drawn between the Western and the Eastern parts of Southeast Asia in matter of religions. The former was the area where Buddhism, especially that of the Pāli tradition, presumably the Theravāda, predominated. The latter showed strong impact of Brahmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism.

However, this is not the whole picture, since we have found also evidence of the existence of other schools of Buddhism in both areas. What kind of ideology permitted this situation to happen? The factors involved in creating this favorable situation for numerous creeds to appear together can be ascribed partly to outside factors. We have shown earlier that the situation somehow can be connected with the changing of the sea route in the eighth century. In this chapter we shall look for the factors generated from within Southeast Asia.

This leads us to another important question concerning the perception toward religion of the peoples in this region.

The chapter therefore will be divided into three parts. We shall first deal with the indigenous beliefs. Then we shall try to look at the relation between the indigenous beliefs and the Indian ones. And in the last part the concept of religion in Southeast Asian cultures and its effect on the religiosity of the region will be investigated.

Indigenous Beliefs

The problems concerning the indigenous belief have intrigued great minds such as Coedès, Paul Mus and Wales. In their books and articles they tried to search for the substrata of Southeast Asian cultures, using data from "cultural fossils" hidden under the Indian religions. We shall begin our task by reviewing the legacy left by those great scholars.

Coedès in his book *The Indianized states of Southeast Asia*, mentions the indigenous belief in the broadest sense. Summing up the studies of Mus, Hocart and Przyluski, he mentions "with regard to religion, belief in animism, the worship of ancestors and of the god of soil, the building of shrines in the high places, burial of the dead in jars or dolmens; with regard to mythology, 'a cosmological dualism in which opposed the mountain and the sea, the winged race and the aquatic race, the men of the heights and those of the coast.'"[1]

Coedès did not explain how these ideas came about. Neither did he offer any explanation on the relations between the indigenous beliefs and the Indian ones.

It is Paul Mus who tries to describe the religiosity of the region before the coming of the Great religions of India. In his article "Cultes indiens et indigènes au Champa,"[2] probably the first among the attempts to assess the contribution of the

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[1]Coedès, (1968), p. 9.

[2]Mus, (1975), a translation by I.W. Mabbett of the original article from *BEFEO*, XXXIII : 367-410, is published as a monograph in the Monash Papers on Southeast Asia.

indigenous culture to the process of Indianization of Southeast Asia, Mus gives an account of indigenous belief. He focuses his research in the area where the Cham culture once flourished, and at the period right before Indian culture arrived in the area. Nevertheless, his exposition proves to be applicable, more or less, to a vast area, namely, the pan-asian culture which includes Indian, Chinese and Southeast Asian. Comparing the circumstance in question to that of the "Mediterranean civilization," he proposes

> A hundred, two hundred or a thousand kilometres of land, divided by mountains, forest and hostile tribes, like the Indo-Chinese peninsula or the Deccan in the ancient times, Wherever sea lanes establish communication, it is reasonable to expect a cultural unity, and it makes more sense to speak of a religion of the monsoon zone of Asia than to speak of Indian religion, or Chinese religion, prior to the civilizations which were later to give the meaning to these words.[3]

He sums up the situation by using the term "animism" after cautioning that it has been abused.[4] He describes "animism" of the inhabitants of ancient India, India-China and southern China as beliefs "in spirits, present in all things and in all places- disembodied human souls, spirits of water and woods, etc.- and that they also credited certain men with the magic power of conjuring them up or warding them off."[5] One point which is worth stressing here is that in the case of spirits of "inanimate" things such as mountains, trees etc., the phenomenon is not the same as a thing is possessed by a spirit, but rather the spirit is the vital essence of the thing itself. In addition to this aspect, he emphasizes the relations between these spirits and the people, saying

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[3]Ibid., p. 9.

[4]Ibid. For definition and development of the term see *ER*, I: 290-302.

[5]Ibid., p. 9.

> But the omnipresence of the spirits is only one side of the religion we are studying: the other is the conviction that through suitable procedures it is possible to summon them, to propitiate them or to ward them off. The two aspects go together, and I believe that it is the activities of sorcerers- their techniques of conjuring up - which, more than anything else, has peopled the sphere of communal human life with various spirits: in fact the spirits are seen not at all in isolation but always in relationship with man, embodying in some fashion something that he desires if not something that he fears. Everywhere they are conceived of in terms of humanity.[6]

Among these spirits Mus accords the primacy to the spirit of soil. He proposes that the cult of the lord of the soil would best characterize the form of religion which he believes to be that of the monsoon Asia. Following Chavannes who quotes the Chinese Book of Rites, he defines the lord of the soil as the divinization of the energies of the soil. Therefore, the concept is that of impersonal amorphous entity. Mus describes "Not quite a genie: it is not a superhuman being, but a being to be abstracted from man; invisible, but made in his image....Its basis is rather in events than in the human person."[7]

Mus then asserts that there is some limitation in the concept. On the one side we have an impersonal, impalpable god, on the other side, a human group by reference to which this god assumes his position of a god. The problem is how to make the god aware of the needs and the desires of the people. In this situation sacrifice becomes an important means of communication between god and men. In the process this god has been transformed into a tangible entity such as a tree or a stone. The god is located or rather manifests himself in things such as stones, trees etc. But this does not mean that the god is residing in the tree or stone, rather the thing is conceived as the god itself, consubstantially. This can be seen as the concentrated or intensified form of the lord of the soil.[8]

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[6]Ibid., p. 10.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid., pp. 13 ff.

In this type of religion, Mus contends that this type of religion should be conceived in three terms: the divine position, the human position and the ritual position.

> The stone corresponds to the divinization of the energies of the soil. Over against it stands a human group. Between the two is to be interposed a link in touch with man on the one hand and the god on the other. this link is the temporary personification of the the divinity. Sometimes a victim that has been sacrificed concentrates the abstract entity in it for the duration of the rite, and furnishes it with its eyes and ears. Sometimes, more conveniently, the group delegates a priest, and pre-eminently its chief, to receive the deity into himself and to represent it.[9]

Mus thus connects the concept of the sacral kingship to that of the cult of soil. He sees the chief of a group as the medium of the divinity. The expression of the energies of the earth is common to the god and the chief. And with this concept the assurance of the fertility, the well-being of the group is seen as residing in the chief.

With the same line of reasoning Mus contends that this delegated chief would also be represented by the ancestor of the chief who, after passing away, would be buried in the earth. And this establishes the close relationship between the soil god and the ancestor. Mus cites examples of the Chinese cult of soil to support his idea.[10]

The next issue in this line of thinking is that how this concept of lord of the soil relates to the great religions of India and the great civilizations established later in this zone : the Indian and the Chinese. For the Chinese civilization the cult of soil constitutes the main religious concept.

For the Indian civilization this indigenous concept has come into contact with the influx of the Aryan culture introduced from the West. This new culture, Mus thinks, has been infused with or localized in the pre-Aryan religious concept, resulting

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[9]Ibid., p. 14.

[10]Ibid., pp. 16-18.

in the cult of Yakṣa which is the cult of the tutelary divinities and the cult of Śiva which is represented by the simple image as the Śivalinga, seen as the concentrated form of the soil or the earth.[11]

In the cult of tutelate divinities, Mus sees the gods of Indo-Aryan origin undergoing fixation, localization in the soil.[12] The relationship between a local soil god forms the concept of the unity of a community. From this we may venture to say that in a village the bond is established between the village god and the head of the village. The chief in a sense stands as the symbol for all the people in that community. These village gods would then be subsumed under the regional one. The regional gods then would be subsumed under the "national" god, the one in connection with the king. Therefore, this phenomenon is hierarchical, from the village god up to the national god or the god of the dynasty.[13]

The same situation applies in the case of the cult of Śiva as he says

> For a linga worshipped in the capital of a kingdom, great or small, or even in a mere village, is not an allegorical representation of the God, reigning in his distant heaven. It is not Śiva, it is "a Śiva", the "Śiva of the country"; the prosperity of the people or of the dynasty depends on it. In a word it is the equivalent of the well-known stone or mound of the earth genie worshipped by the Vietnamese and the Chinese.[14]

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[11]Ibid., pp. 28 ff.

[12]The term 'localization' here has the meaning in the strict locating sense. It means that a god becomes attached to the soil or a locality. But it does not seem to suggest that a god when localized, is characteristically localized. In studying culture of Southeast Asia, the word usually is applied to show how local culture has influenced the foreign one. See Wolters, (1982).

[13]Mus, (1975), p. 19. Mus asserts that "Indology, preoccupied with its classical reminiscences and its Indo-European interests, has, as far as I know, almost completely neglected to use the scattered but ancient and specific documents which would attest, on the Indian side, very similar beliefs. In the *Jātaka*, the *Sutta*, and the *Atthakathā* of the Pali tradition may be found all the elements of a government of the beyond: the family genie is responsible to the genie of the town, and he in turn to the gods presiding over the four quarters; these, finally, obey Indra, whose divine city is represented on earth by the capital of the kingdom, in a sense its material "double." His statement, quite interestingly, can be substantiate by the official name of Bangkok in phrases such as 'mahindrāyudhyā, sakkadutiya-vessukammaprasiddha (śakradvītyavaiśvakarmaprasiddha)' which form part of the full name.

[14]Mus, (1975), p. 31.

As in the case of the pre-Aryan religion the mediator is said to be Vedic chief whose position is fit to unite the two groups of people. Mus sees Hinduism as a religion of the chief and in his opinion it remains pre-eminently a religion of royalty. Buddhism also is mentioned as bearing "the heavy imprint of the royal ritual; and this ritual is to my way of thinking more Indian than Indo-European."[15]

The situation when Indian culture came to Southeast Asia is seen to be comparable to that of India. Local gods were identified with different forms of Hindu gods. The cult of soil represented by its concentrated form, stone, remained as the basis. Its form might change into linga or images of Hindu gods fixed or localized into the indigenous tutelate divinities. The hierarchical scheme also functioned in the same way; village gods would be inferior to those of cities, and those of cities to the capital.

Thus it may be assumed that Mus thinks the process of fixation of the Indo-European or Indo-Aryan religion into the pre-Aryan, the monsoon religion, which would become what we call by Indian religion, occurred in India long before the Indian culture was known to Southeast Asia. In this case religions from India had to be considered as a synthesis of Indo-Aryan formula and indigenous one common to all the monsoon region. Consequently the appropriation of these Indian concepts was not so perceptible to the people of Southeast Asia. In fact Mus even proposes that what had come to Southeast Asia was the diffusion of the old Asiatic ideas, the cult of soil. He comments: "the ideas that were instantly recognized, understood and endorsed by peoples who perhaps were not always aware of wholly changing their religion in adopting those of India."[16]

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[15]Ibid., p. 35.

[16]Ibid., p. 36.

In the process of the Indianization of the Cham, Mus maintains that there was a pattern of three stages: indigenous religion, application and assimilation of Hinduism, reversion to the indigenous.[17] This paradigm would be taken by Wales who applies it extensively in his works on the religiosity of Southeast Asia to which we shall now direct our attention.

Wales wrote three principal books on the topic of religions of Southeast Asia. They are *The Making of Greater India* in which he proposes the concept of "local genius" (1951), *The Mountain of God* in which the idea expressed by Mus on the cult of soil has been expanded and identified with the cult of "the Mountain of God" originated in the Mesopotamian civilization (1953) and the last one, *Prehistory and Religion in Southeast Asia* (1957), which comprises all his ideas concerning Southeast Asian religions. In these three books, especially the last one, Wales ventured to reconstruct the religious situation of Southeast Asia in prehistoric times. The method used is twofold, archaeological and anthropological. The latter is based on the data from the surviving primitive societies in Southeast Asia.

He proposes that in the Paleolithic age the religion was that of the Lord of beasts and later the Sky God, considering the hunting situation in which people had to constantly move and thus were not attached to the land.[18] In Neolithic age agriculture had gradually developed, and as a result, the importance of the earth was recognized. This latter together with the former religion of the Paleolithic period had become the couple: Father Sky and Mother Earth.[19] And also in this period there appeared the Megalithic culture which was, Wales thinks, a major characteristic of the "Old Asiatic

[17]Ibid., pp. 51 ff.

[18]Wales, (1957), pp. 5 ff.

[19]Ibid., p. 17.

religion."[20] But he seems to have a very vague idea of what the Old Asiatic religion and the Older Megalithic are. For example in his last book he says:

> I should now like to proceed with the new evidence obtained as to the association of what I have called the "Old Asiatic religion" with the Older Megalithic, *both in the west and in the east,* because this closeness of association adds to the probability that it was the Older Megalithic that brought the Old Asiatic religion from the West. But I realize that the reader will need to know what I mean by the Old Asiatic religion, and the way in which it transformed the character of the Older Megalithic until in later ages through the loss of culture the primitive belief returned.[21]

It seems that at first he thinks that it was the Older Megalithic culture that brought the religion. But later on it seems, from what he wrote to be the reverse. Whatever the case may be, this religion is identified with the cult of the sacred mountain where the mysterious potency of the earth was concentrated.

Concerning the Earth God, Wales follows Mus's idea expressed in his article 'Cultes indiens et indigènes au Champa.' The concept is built around the idea that Earth or soil constitutes the central cult of the age. What Mus calls "the monsoon religion" Wales calls "Old Asiatic religion."[22] Wales modifies the concept in two aspects. First, he thinks that this cult of the soil should be seen as a form of "the Mountain of God," which he believes to have originated in the Mesopotamian civilizations. Second, he sets Mus's idea into a time frame by specifying that this cult belonged to the Neolithic period.[23]

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[20]Ibid., pp. 20 ff.

[21]Ibid., p. 30. (The italicization is of the author.)

[22]Ibid., pp. 34 ff.

[23]Ibid., pp. 35 ff. Wales criticizes Mus that "what Mus failed to do on the account of his restricted viewpoint: the ultimate importance of the mountain and that the association of ancestor and earth god was due to a fusion of cultures." What Wales means by cultures here are the Old Asiatic (the cult of soil) and the Old Megalithic cultures.

His account of the change of different types of beliefs and cults has close connections with the movement of ethnic groups. Especially in the Neolithic era, following Heine-Geldern, Wales proposes:

> With full Neolithic was Quadrangular Adze culture, which probably came into South-east Asia and North-east India from the north between 2500 and 1500 B.C., for it must have been established in the latter area well before the coming of the Aryans. It seems to have come in several wave and is associated with the peoples speaking Malayo-Polynesian (Austronesian) languages. It pushed right through to Indonesia and beyond, but in Further India it mixed with and influenced another Neolithic culture, the Shouldered Adze, which was associated with the peoples speaking Môn-Khmer (Austro-asiatic) languages. One of the features of the Quadrangular Adze culture was the erecting of megalithics, and a complex of religious beliefs associated with them.[24]

For this complex religious beliefs Wales quoted Heine-Geldern who describes the present-day form of this type of belief:

> ..the megaliths are connected with special notions concerning life after death; that the majority are erected in the course of rites destined to protect the soul from dangers believed to threaten it in the underworld or on its way there, and to assure the eternal life either to the persons who erect the monuments as their own memorials while alive, or to those to whom they are erected after their death; that at the same time the megaliths are destined to serve as a link between the dead and the living and to enable the latter to participate in the wisdom of the dead; that they are thought to perpetuate the magic qualities of the persons who had erected them to whom they had been erected, thereby furthering the fertility of men, livestock and crops and promoting the wealth of future generation.[25]

Wales modifies this description by identifying it as "anthropological not a historic one." In trying to trace the beliefs back in time, he reasons "When the anthropologists' accounts are examined closely, and certainly known parallel

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[24]Wales, (1957), p. 21.

[25]Quoted by Wales, (1957), p. 23. For the present stage of the study of megalithic culture see *ER*, IX: 336-346; and also *ESEA*, pp. 242-254.

developments are taken into consideration, surviving features are discovered which cannot be explained in terms of this fertility cult. They point rather to the former existence of more complex religious concepts. These oblige us to form an opinion that what we have before us to-day represents essentially a return to primitive animism and ancestor worship, as a result of a loss of culture after the advanced influences had been ceased to operate."[26] He considers that the Older Megalithic culture in Southeast Asia, which had been traced by Heine-Geldern as spreading from the Mediterranean region to Southeast Asia around the third millennium B.C., was influenced by the higher religions developed in the urban centers of Mesopotamia. The Old Megalithic culture is thus considered by Wales as diffusing from the Mesopotamian cities.[27]

For the proto-historical period which is named by Wales as 'Bronze religion,' he believes that the religion was Shamanism. Most of his evidence comes from the interpretation of the bronze drums found in most of the areas of Southeast Asia.[28] Wales defines and describes the situation of Shamanism as follows:

> By shamanism we understand primarily the religion which survives, sometime in relatively well-preserved from, among some of the Turco-Tatra and Mongol Tribes of Central Asia and Siberia. Since it is obviously a very ancient religion, and is continually being diminished by the spread of the higher religions from the south, it is reasonable to suppose that....it once covered an even wider extent of the Eurasian continent than has been the case in historical times.
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> The distinction Eliade makes between shamanism *stricto sensu* and other widespread forms of sorcery is of vital importance, the abuse of the term to include all kinds of prophets, soothsayers and medicine men by the majority of having threatened to deprive the word shaman of all value as a cultural definition. Shamanism proper is the magico-religious complex most fully

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[26]Wales, (1957), p. 25.

[27]Wales, (1957), pp. 30 ff.

[28]Wales, (1957), chapter 3.

> developed among the nomads of Central and Northern Asia, and is essentially an ecstatic experience *put at the service of society* . That is its first mark of distinction from the activities of miscellaneous healers and prophets who are to be found everywhere. Secondly, in strict shamanism the shaman calls to his aid certain spirits whom he controls and is never "possessed" by them. It is with there help that his soul leaves his body in an ecstatic state induced by music and dance, and travels, usually to the celestial regions, sometimes to the underworld. There is no "possession" either by gods or by ancestors, although there may be admixture of such mediumship where there has been influence from the co-existence with cultures in which that type of practice thrives.[29]

Along this line of interpretation, the source of Shamanism in Southeast Asia is clear: "[Shamanism is] best known to us from its survivals in Central Asia and Siberia, and would have been brought into Yunnan and northern Indochina by nomads from north and west."[30] And from that area it spread through Southeast Asia, both mainland and maritime.[31] Wales summarizes his theory on the advent and the development of Shamanism in Southeast Asia as follows:

> The religion of these nomads was shamanism, with the worship of celestial deities. This religion, though doubtless already influenced by Babylonian and Assyrian cosmology, was then free from the influence of the great world religions, as well as ancestor worship of the settled agricultural Mongoloid peoples. In Yunnan and northern Indochina there took place towards the middle of the first millennium B.C. a hybridization of the nomadic bronze-using people's culture with that of the settled Neolithic Malayo-Polynesian speaking population in this region. Though democratization took place, the shamanism was at first strictly the religion of the upper class, representing the new arrivals, while the local people continued to follow an impoverished form of the religion belonging to the Older Megalithic. This was largely a cult of chthonic force, in which the ancestor element did not yet predominate. As the influence of this hybrid culture spread down the coast of Annam and through Indonesia, probably not later than the middle of the first millennium B.C., it gradually lost strength, so that in the Lesser Sunda Islands the Older Megalithic

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[29]Ibid., pp. 61-62.

[30]Ibid., p. 50.

[31]Ibid.

> maintained itself or at least ultimately succeeded in regaining much of its old position.[32]

Wales's description of religiosity in the Neolithic and Bronze ages of Southeast Asia so far is strongly influenced by the concept of diffusion. Theories on migration of different races are still being debated among scholars. Some say they were from north to south, some, south to north.[33] *Above all we do not have any data to substantiate that there was any contact between the prehistoric Mediterranean cultures and the prehistoric northern Indian, not to mention prehistoric Southeast Asian.* Neither have we the data on the migration of nomads from Central Asia and Siberia into Southeast Asia.

If we would like to substantiate that there was Shamanism in Southeast Asia, we have to look for the fossil lĕft in the modern societies. Of course, there still are traces of Shamanism everywhere, but they are not in the strict sense as Wales proposes. And it is not acceptable to say that at each period religious situation must be this or that "ism" in its pure form. Wales later realizes this situation in his rather contradictory exposition by using the term "hybridization."[34] His claim that the characteristic of this Shamanism of the Dongson cultures is related to the celestial gods seems to contradict his definition of Shamanism, since the shaman did not only communicate with the sky but also with the underworld. In this case the contrast between the chthonic cult of the Older Megalithic and the celestial oriented Shamanism of the Bronze ages seems to bear no relevance to the religious situation of Southeast Asia.

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[32]Ibid., p. 107.

[33]See *ER*, XIII: 513 ff., Coedès, (1966),

[34]Wales, (1957), p. 107.

An important concept which Wales derives from Mus is that indigenous religions would finally reemerge, once that the influence of "great religions" of Indian has subsided.[35] His hypothesis is that the "local genius": the Older Megalithic culture and the Dongson culture "reacted" to the Indian religions in different ways.[36] They account for the difference in the religious situation in Khmer, Cham and Indonesian civilizations. In the case of the Khmer religion, it was the Older Megalithic cult, the Cham the Dongson. In the development of the Indo-Javanese religion both old Megalithic and Dong-son cultures were responsible; the former is the more ancient and did not reappear until the last period of Indo-Javanese history before the coming of Islam. Wales also thinks that in the Cham and the Indo-Javanese cases, because of the celestial character of the Dongson culture, Mahāyāna Buddhism was found more acceptable than in the case of the Khmer whose indigenous culture was the Older Megalithic.[37]

This theory of 'local genius' is based on the idea that the indigenous tradition asserts itself and equally or fundamentally involves the process of Indianization. Wales thinks that the originality belongs to the indigenous culture; Indian civilization is just an instigator. Hence, the achievements of great monuments such as Angkor Wat and Barabudur are seen as local genius in operation. In the case of the Khmer, the pyramidal temple, an architectural style interpreted by Wales as chthonic or megalithic by nature suggests that the "local genius" behind the style is the Older megalithic culture. In the case of the Javanese, Barabudur was fashioned in the steps toward the sky, hence, it was expressed through the Dongson culture.

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[35]Wales, (1957), p. 126. Coedès in dealing with 'Indianization' also thinks that the process of 'Indianization' was in decline in the fourteen century. The principle by which he measures this phenomenon is the use of Sanskrit. Actually, as a process the factors and the forces of Indian culture is still going on in Southeast Asia, but not directly from India.

[36]For full explanation on his theory of 'Local genius', see Wales, (1951).

[37]Wales, (1957), pp. 109 ff., especially, pp. 125-126; 172-175.

Wales limits his account only to the Khmer, the Cham and the Java traditions. He thus proposes two distinct areas in Southeast Asia: the eastern zone which includes Burma, Thailand and in some case Sri Lanka and the western zone, the areas mentioned above. He discards the other areas of Southeast Asia, Sri Lanka included, because he thinks that the 'local genius' was never in evidence. In his opinion, the acculturation in the western zone was so complete that the phenomenon of "the local genius" never occurred.[38]

However, evidence in areas other than those intended by Wales such as in the Pyu and Dvāravatī shows strong localization of Indian culture. It happened very early if not the earliest among cultures of Southeast Asia.[39] In fact both Khmer and Javanese cultures show much stronger influences from India than any other cultures in Southeast Asia. That there is no building in the grand scale does not always mean that the localization has never occurred. Moreover, the belief in Earth god or God of the Soil and Shamanism etc., did or rather does exist among other cultures of Southeast Asia, not just the Khmer or Javanese.[40]

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[38]Ibid., 110-111. See also Senake Bandaranayake, (1974), p. 9 footnote 1, his comments on this issue: "The work of Quaritch Wales is part of a considerable body of writing -mostly by French and Dutch scholars- which confronts the problem of 'cultural change', 'Indianisation' and 'the differentiation of cultures' in South-East Asia. The most recent of these studies now recognise- although still from a rather mechanistically Indian's viewpoint- the part played by local tradition in the development and formation of culture and civilisation in the societies of South-East Asia. Within the terms set by these writers there is no better definition of this factor than what Wales has called 'local genius', which he explains thus: "local genius, the continuing effect of the previous civilisations, is far from being just one ingredient in a mixture. In conditioning the response to foreign stimulus it provides the agency which moulds the borrowed material, giving it an original twist and at the same time preserving and emphasising the distinctive character of the evolution." Whatever might be thought of Wales' somewhat simplistic interpretation of his material in developing this hypothesis, it must be conceded that in comparison to some other approaches it is at least an attempt to investigate fundamental historical problem by a rational method..... However, in the course of our analysis we make certain observations about Ceylon and the Sinhalese tradition which have some relevance to the concept of 'Indianisation'. This problem so far as has been dealt with mainly by scholars whose work has been concentrated on the art and architecture of the South-East Asian countries. This applies to Quaritch Wales himself, whose observations on Ceylon are based on such apparently superficial reading that they are of little value. We, ourselves, reject Wales' division of the South and South-East Asian into a western and an eastern zone, seen from viewpoint of a seminal Indian source...." See also Coedès, (1958).

[39]See Snellgrove, (1978), pp. 139-164.

[40]Mus, (1975), pp. 19-21.

Wales uses archaeological data to support his hypothesis of different indigenous cultures. However if we examine his data closely we cannot really see any difference between the prasat Khmer said by Wales to have been aspired by Old Megalithic religion and the Cham tower, Dongsonian culture. Coedès has aptly pointed out this

> Je ne crois pas, par example, qu'il soit légitime d'opposer, comme le Dr Quaritch Wales le fait implicitement, le prasat khmèr à la tour chame : les deux types de monuments sont pratiquement identiques dans leur conception, et celle-ci n'est autre que celle du temple indien si magistralement analysée par Stella Kramisch (The Hindu Temple, 1946). Il n'est plus légitime d'pposer le temple-montange khmèr, d'inspiration chtonienne, au Borobudur, symbole d'une ascension vers le ciel: en tant que monument dynasties élevé en l'honneur de la dynasties ailendra, représenté au centre de la plus haute terrasse sous les traits du Buddha Akshobhya (de Caspadis, Prasasti Indonesia, I, 1950), le Borobudur est tout aussi inspiré par le culte chtonien de la royauté divinisée que le temple-montagne khmer, et celui-ci en tant que repreesentation du mont Meru au sommet duquel siège le dieu Indra entouré des Trente-Trois (Filliozat, Le symbolisme du Phnom Bakhèng, *BEFEO*, XLIV, p. 527) symbolise tout autant que le Borobudur une ascension vers le ciel.[41]

Now let us evaluate what has been proposed by these two scholars. What Mus suggested is in the line of "macrosystemism." He views the development in terms of religion is Southeast Asia as the general trend of the monsoon region. But this does not mean that the situation remains untouched by outside forces. Since in India we have the intervention of the Aryan people who brought with them the Indo-European (Indo-Aryan) religion. And in Southeast Asia, Indian religions were present as early as the beginning of the common era. Mus sees these phenomena, more or less, as parallel. What Mus has suggested is that the indigenous belief of Southeast Asia should be somewhat similar to the indigenous belief of India, that is to say, the monsoon religion. And the main cult would be that of the earth or soil with connection to ancestral worship.

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[41]Coedès, (1958), p. 353.

Mus used the same pattern to describe religiosity of both India and Southeast Asia. However, in the case of Southeast Asia it seems that sometimes Mus has put too much emphasis on this cult of the soil. There are of course reminiscences of this cult which can be seen clearly especially in the concept of kingship. In Southeast Asia, the king is usually called the Lord of the Land. But he also has other epithets such as the Lord of Lives, the Great Warrior etc., which suggest trends other than that of the cult of the soil.[42] And that the line of succession has always been very flexible seems to point toward the direction of other beliefs than that of the cult of soil which, because of the close relationship between the cult and the ancestral cult, should promote the very strict line of succession as in the case of China.

In Southeast Asia, all the spirits, the gods and the belief in vital force residing in every thing etc., which are not Indian in origin usually remain untouched. Their names remain in vernacular languages, except in the case when one wants to upgrade them, the name sometimes is translated into Sanskrit or Pāli, for example, a spirit of the land, Bhūmidevatā.[43] The Indian ones are added to the pantheon, but by no means dethroning the old ones. Of course sometimes the characters of these gods and spirits become analogous. And this should not give us any surprise as it has been pointed out by Mus that the concept more or less originated from the same circumstance.

Recent studies confirm that nowadays Southeast Asian society remains agricultural in its character.[44] Their lives are still evolving with the spirits germane to agriculture.[45] That which is answering their needs in surviving, the god of rain, rice

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[42]See the words used to refer to the king in various languages of Southeast Asia, infra. footnote 94 of this chapter.

[43]See Porée-Maspéro, (1962-9), Souyris-Rolland, (1951); Anuman Rajadhon, (1987); Mulder, (Jan 1979).

[44]See previous footnote for reference.

[45]*ER*, X: 352-360.

etc., and other spirits. We thus can see that the main character of Southeast Asian religion before coming into contact with Hinduism and Buddhism was a kind of "animism." These are spirits of different features of nature, of ancestors.[46] But again as in the case of the concept of kingship, whether the spirit of the soil was the most important one or not we do not know, since there are no data to support Mus's assertion. In recent studies, these spirits seem to hold different duties according the needs of the people as we can see from the cult of Neak Ta in Cambodia, Chao or Phii in Thailand and the Nats in Burma. There is also a belief in the vital forces as a central component of life called Khwan in Thai.[47] The problem is how this pattern asserts itself and reacts to the new pattern imported from the outside.

When this indigenous belief confronts a new pattern of other creeds which in the case of India, the Indo-European, and in the case of Southeast Asia, the "Great religions" of India, his idea that the chief or the king serves as the mediator proves very convincing. But Mus's theory on localization seems to have operated in another way. They were not identified with or became a local god, even though Hindu and Buddhist deities, Buddha included, were worshiped in the same manner as a local god would be. They take up the character of local god and sometimes became identified with a specific locality. But they retain their Indian names. We find expressions such as Śiva or Viṣṇu of such and such a town, Buddha of such and such a place.[48] They were usually accorded the highest status over the local indigenous gods.[49]

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[46]For Burma see Brohm, (Feb 1963); Spiro, (1967). For Thailand see Anuman Rajadhon, (1987). For Cambodia see Souyris-Rolland, (1951); Porée-Maspéro, (1958, 1962-9).

[47]See Tambiah, (1968, 1980).

[48]We have data that these icons usually have a specific name. This practice still exists in Thailand and Burma. Most of the images of the Buddha are normally named. See *IT*, II: 62, 64.

[49]See Tambiah, (1968) and Anuman Rajadhon, (1986).

The indigenous beliefs, spirit cults, seem to have existed side by side with the Indian religions rather than have been superseded by them.[50] There is no evidence to suggest that all the spirits of the local religions have been replaced by the Indian ones. And if there was the case in India that the Indo-European gods were localized, the same concept can be applied to Southeast Asia. However, there is no evidence that the local deities had been identified with those of the Indian.

Therefore, in suggesting the course of development of the religious situation in Southeast Asia as indigenous-indianized following by the reappearing of the indigenous belief, Mus seems to have contradicted himself. Since in the case of India, he does not see the outcome of the synthesis between the indigenous and the Indo-European cultures as "indo-europeanized" and later as "reappearing of the indigenous." The evidence cited by Mus to support his idea in the case of the Cham is of the royal character expressing himself through Indian religion, and thus strongly shows Indian aspect of the situation.[51] For want of data of the religious situation among people at large, one cannot depend solely on that type of data to create the whole picture of religious life of the Cham. Mus's example does not in any sense show that the local gods have been identified with the Hindu ones. We cannot be

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[50]This is evident in case that kings such as Aniruddha of Burma and Ramkhamhaeng could not neglect to propitiate these spirits.

[51]Mus, (1975), p. 52. His reason is as follows:

> Thus Indian contribution profoundly influenced Cham culture. As for the level reached by this culture in its heyday, I do not think that I can find a better way of making you aware of it than by quoting for you, following the remarkable translation by Abel Bergaigne, the beginning of a hymn to the goddess of Nha-trang, the ancient Bhagavatī Kauthāreśvarā, identified by the poet with Umā, spouse of Śiva: " Pertaining to him who is the lord of what is and what is not, having as real nature the quality of being the origin of the development of existence on earth... being one with the being and the non-being that exists in the world, primordial potentiality of the being and the non-being, having as body the half of the body of Śiva who has the moon as diadem, having a beautiful body, Oh you who are aprt of the Lord.. Oh Blessed One, be as it were, by your amgic power, the vanquisher of us who are prostrate before you." This inscription is by the king Śrī Parameśvara. That is how a Cham thought and how he expressed himself in Sanskrit in 1050 A.D.

However, this Cham was not just a Cham but a king whose court must have been crowded with Brāhmans who probably composed these stanzas. Therefore, this cannot be used as an evidence to assert that at one time the religion of the Chams was totally indianized.

certain that at the same time the local gods have to be subservient to the Indian ones. Both could exist side by side. Indigenous belief does not "reappear", but rather it continues to be present.

As for Wales, his line of thinking seems to be that of "continuity." But it is rather unclear since what he calls "Old Asiatic" "Older Megalithic" seems to have been introduced from outside. But he asserts that they are the result of the operation of the "local genius". He uses Mus's paradigm, but not as an evolutionistic scheme of the cultures of Southeast Asia, but rather as a proof to his concept of local genius. He believes that if it were not because of the Thai who conquered the Khmer and thus the adopting of Theravāda Buddhism, the Older Megalithic would have reappeared in Cambodia as the cult of the soil had reappeared among the Cham.

His concept of "Older Megalithic" is now considered obsolete. The remains of these megalithics cannot be dated with certainty since the culture is continuing to be a living culture in most part of Southeast Asia. Moreover, there is no real unity in these megalithics which could have substantiated a 'pan-cultural' concept.[52] Considering this inadequacy of the data, any conclusion drawn would fall into mere conjecture. Thus, Wales's assertion on the evolution of the religious pattern in Southeast Asia cannot be sustained.

Both are still trapped in the concept of a seminal point. Mus, even if he had tried to avoid this pitfall still thinks on the same line. By applying the sequence or phases of the characteristic of religion or culture in Southeast Asia as indigenous, indianized and the reappearing of the indigenous culture, Mus definitely was thinking on the line of contrasting the Indian religions with the indigenous ones. Wales, in dividing Southeast Asia into the eastern zone and the western zone, clearly uses the

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[52]*ESEA*, pp. 242 ff. And also *ER*, IX: 336-346.

degree of the influence of Indian culture or religions to differentiate cultural perspective of these two zones.

Yet their interest in indigenous belief has influenced scholars to take into consideration indigenous belief when they look at religious situation in Southeast Asia.

Indigenous Beliefs and Indian Religions

Recent emphasis in the indigenous belief as an important component of the religiosity of Southeast Asia leads us to another set of problems. It constitutes not only the difficulty in defining indigenous belief and Indian religions, but also in selecting methodologies that are best suited to the situation. These two problems are related. Sometimes the definition chosen leads to the selection of the methodology, sometimes the methodology dictates the definition.

A common understanding would be that any religions originated in India can be called Indian religions. But what are they? How can we define Hinduism? Can we deal with Buddhism as an area separated from Hinduism? How did these two main traditions interact? Had the so called "syncretization" of Hinduism and Buddhism already taken place in India?

In dealing with the situation, scholars, mainly sociologists and anthropologists, seek their refuge first in the concept of "Great tradition" and "Little tradition."[53] This dichotomy is based on the difference, observed by researchers, between the scriptural religion and the practical one.[54] In the case of religions of India, religion as

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[53]A study of all these works concerning Theravāda has been written by Terence P. Day's *Great Tradition and Little Tradition in Theravāda Buddhist Studies*. The work is a summary of important researches in the past two decades. Unfortunately his style is very tensed and difficult to understand. It seems like he has amassed his materials from book reviews written by scholars and set right to the paper without much changing.

[54]Leach, (1968), has summarized the situation very well in his introduction to a book entitled *Dialectic in Practical Religion*, p. 1: "In studies of comparative religion a failure to take into account this distinction between philosophical religion and practical religion has often led to grave misunderstanding. Thus Western interpretation of Buddhism has, until very recently, been derived almost exclusively from a scholarly study

prescribed in the Sanskrit texts is defined as the "Great Tradition" and that which is practiced by the masses especially in the villages is defined as the "Little Tradition."[55] In the Southeast Asian religion's own context, religious traditions from India are seen as the "Great Tradition", and the indigenous cultures are seen as the "Little Tradition."

There are of course variations in interpreting these two terms. But the application remains in the same trend that is to see the religiosity of India, and for that matter, of Southeast Asia, as phenomena consisting of conflicts and tensions between these two poles. By imposing this method of investigation, the questions we ask concerning the religiosity in India and Southeast Asia are formed accordingly. Instead of trying to understand religion from the local people's point of view, scholars superimpose their own concept of religion and also the methodology to deal with the conflict, which may very well have never occurred in the mind of peoples who profess these creeds.

As a result what the masses practice is seen as a relegated version of what is in the scripture. The concept is accompanied by terms such as primitive, local, animistic, supernatural or, positively called, indigenous beliefs. But as we look at what scholars used as standard or normative texts in the case of Hinduism, we find that texts such as Mahābhārata and Purānas represent the collection of popular religious beliefs which in principle should be named the "Little Tradition" rather than the "Great Tradition." In this case the use of the Sanskritic tradition to support the "Great Tradition" is a failure.

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of ancient Pali text glossed by the modern commentaries of professional Buddhist theologians; very little attention has been paid to the ordinary practice of Buddhism in the parishes of its indigenous homeland in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand or else where.." From that time until these days we have more studies of practical side of Buddhism. But one fact remains: it is always studied in crder to show the contrast or tension against the textual side.

[55]Marriott, (June 1955), pp. 171-222.

It is true that Redfield cautions us to look at these two traditions as something that work together integrally. They are "two currents of thought and action, distinguishable, yet ever flowing into and out of each other." From this point of view we can see how vague the concept has been constructed. If they are not to be seen separately, why propose to separate them at all? By what principle can we determine which tradition should be termed "great", and which should be termed as "little" when they are "ever flowing into and out of each other"?[56]

Moreover, Redfield also proposes another connecting idea, the two types of civilization: the primary and the secondary ones. The former are found in Indian and Chinese traditions in which the civilization is indigenous, having developed out of the precivilized people of that very culture. The latter are found in the peasant societies of Latin America whose record of events is overlaid with the strong impress of another civilization that invaded America from abroad. Needless to say that the civilization of Southeast Asia could easily be included in this category.[57]

Any historian who studies Indian history or civilization will find Redfield's categorization hard to accept. Indian civilization may be called primary because it influences other civilizations, but not in the sense that it has solely developed out of a precivilized people of that very culture.

So far this approach cannot really lead us to a better understanding of "Hinduism." Would it work better in the case of Buddhism?

When the theory is applied to Buddhism, it seems to be more plausible. This is probably due to the nature of Buddhist scripture being more coherent and more discernible in terms of popular and canonical aspects than that of Hinduism. The

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[56]For a study of Redfield's theory see Day, (1987), pp. 8-13.

[57]Redfield, (1954), in Day, (1987), pp. 8-13.

exposition of this dichotomy thus becomes more vivid. Buddhism, especially the Theravāda, has been dissected into parts depending on the disciplines applied.

We therefore have normative versus non-normative, popular versus elite, court versus peasant Buddhism etc. These variations of Buddhism proposed by scholars can be classified according to the disciplines as follows:

Philosophically it is divided into primitive, Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna and finally tantric phases.

Sociological and anthropological approaches usually make a distinction between "court Buddhism" and "Buddhism of the masses." Or Buddhism is viewed regionally as Sinhalese, Burmese, Thai Buddhism. And when the scale tips toward the side of indigenous beliefs, the word "religion" is preferred to "Buddhism." This is a result derived from applying such concepts such as structuralism, functionalism and regionalism to the data. Since this trend of study is applied mainly on the present situation of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia, we shall deal with it in the next chapter.

The study in the first category is usually diachronical. The last two are the result of studying Buddhism synchronically. Later scholars, realizing the lack of historicity in these last two categories have tried to incorporate history into their studies. As a result we have approaches such as socio-historical etc.

In all these cases the dichotomy persists and in most cases these categories affect one other. Thus Mahāyāna Buddhism is said to be the outcome of the tension between the monastic and the secular components which occurred as a reaction against the Abhidharmic or scholastic trend in Buddhism. Hīnayāna Buddhism is seen as the result of ecclesiasticism and scholasticism. Tantric Buddhism is the resurgence

of the indigenous ritual practice of India or the triumph of the mystical aspect of Mahāyāna Buddhism.[58]

On top of this, historicity is added, and therefore the complete history of Indian Buddhism is an evolution starting from "primitive Buddhism" to Tantric Buddhism. But as we probe through the data, there is no real evolution as such. Hīnayāna was never superseded by Mahāyāna. Neither was the latter superseded by Tantra. Studies depending solely upon literary works, showing doctrines and practices of different types of Buddhism, which might be active in different periods of time can be misleading. It provides no proof for the exclusive prevalence of the school which was active literally at that time. When Xuan Zang reports about monks in India, he divides them into eight categories. It is worth noting that the first category which is the most common one consists of monks 'undeclared'; they cannot be named as belonging to any schools. For the rest of monks in India at around the seventh century, if we are to believe the report of Chinese pilgrimages, the number of Hīnayāna monks and monasteries figured more than those of Mahāyāna.[59]

Certainly, the evolutionistic view is not totally wrong. In a teaching like Buddhism, development seems to be unavoidable. It probably occurred right after the Buddha started preaching his doctrine, since people who heard his sermon came from

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[58]There are many theories on the rise of Mahāyāna. Conze, (1980), suggests "It (Mahāyāna Buddhism) was prepared by the exhaustion of the old impulse which produced fewer and fewer Arhats, by tensions within the doctrines as they had developed by then and by the demand of the laity for more equal rights with the monks. Foreign influences also had a great deal to do with it. The Mahāyāna developed in North-West India and South India, the two regions where Buddhism most exposed to non-Indian influences, to the impact of Greek art in its Hellenistic and Romanized form and to the influence of ideas from both the Mediterranean and the Iranian world. This cross-fertilization incidentally rendered Buddhism of the Mahāyāna fit for export outside India." So far Conze sees the emergence of Mahāyāna as a result of both inside and outside influences. Hirakawa, (1963), having rejected the theory that Mahāyāna had its origin only from the Mahāsanghikas, shows that the Sarvāstivādins too had provided a lot of material in the development of Mahāyāna. He also connects the origin of Mahāyāna to the cult of stūpa which, he proposes, had developed in the circle of laity. Schopen, (1985; 1988-89), however, thinks that monks also contribute to the development of Mahāyāna. It should not be seen as lay movement against monasticism.

[59]See Lamotte, (1958), pp. 597-600. The statistic in the seventh century, if we are to believe the Chinese pilgrims, Mahāyāna monks in India numbered around 60,000; Hīnayāna, 134,800.

different backgrounds, hence different interpretations. The movement toward commentarial literature did appear very early in Buddhism.[60] But to view Buddhism as strictly following some linear patterns of development such as from primitive Buddhism to scholastic Buddhism, from monastic to secular etc., without taking into account the socio-cultural background, seems to be unsound.[61] A religion could have developed in various ways depending on the factors and conditions.

In the case of Buddhism in India, we usually forget that it was one of the religious movements of the Indian people and was in every sense Indian. The picture that we have drawn mainly for the sake of convenience to study Indian religions as Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism etc., probably does not represent the real situation in India. Of course, the Buddhist and the Jain might be more conscious of themselves. But they still are Indian, accepting most of the Indian ethics and ideologies. Their religious expression still resembles each other, be they Hindu, Buddhist or Jain. It is probably easier to identify these latter two religions than Hinduism, since the word "Hinduism" is purely academic. The term can be used to denote any kinds of Indian beliefs.

In fact what we call "Indian religions" should be considered as one whole development. They are in essence "Indian," and thus should not be studies as this "ism" or that "ism." It is common among scholars to think that only the Brahmanic tradition is the only genuine "Indian religion," the "orthodox." The rest such as Jainism, Buddhism and other Śramaṇic movements have been termed "heterodox."[62]

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[60]The Pali canon which is reported to be written down as early as the first century A.D. already has the Vibhanga which is the commentary on the Vinaya rules, and part of the Niddesa is the commentary of the Aṭṭhakavagga and the Pārāyanavagga of the Suttanipāta. Actually it even shows the development toward the style of Abhidhammapiṭaka. Suttas such as Dasuttarasutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, and methodology to arrange the Aṅguttara Nikāya by number of Dharma betray the inclination toward Abhidharmic literature.

[61]Schopen has written some extremely informative articles on this point, see Schopen, (1975, 1977, 1979, 1985, 1987, 1988-1989).

[62]Jaini, (1970).

In doing so scholars have superimposed the Western concept, originating from the Christian ideology of having the only norm, on the religious situation of India or Asia in general. Everything outside is thus called "heretic or heterodox."

Can we be so sure that these Śramaṇic movements were "heretic or heterodox" in the Indian context? If we look back to the circumstance at that time, both Brahmanic and Śramaṇic movements seem to have shared not just the concepts and ideologies but enjoyed also the support from the same group of people. One even can say that they even were patronized by the same kings and ministers. Taking for example King Ajātaśatru who figured in all three traditions, the Upanishadic, the Buddhist and the Jain, one cannot say that he belonged only to the Buddhist.[63] Textually speaking, works such as the Suttanipāta, Dharmapada of the Buddhist have their parallels in the Upanishads as well as in the Jain texts.[64] If we had been fortunate to possess texts of other Śramaṇic schools, we probably would have found that they might as well have the same saying.

Of course there are differences among them. But the difference which became more and more obvious only in the later times was mainly due to the fact that the Buddhist and the Jain canons were systematized. They thus show more characteristics of their own. But the Upanishads, which remain more or less unedited, show all the traces of confusing and rather naive views of what we may call "philosophical doctrines or arguments." These "primitive" doctrinal points show the trends which can be seen also in the Buddhist texts. One of the reasons why Buddhism spread rapidly after the third century B.C. seems to be that Buddhism was

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[63]See *BAU*. II. I. ff., and the second sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya.

[64]Bollee, (1981, 1983).

among the first to attempt to systematize its scripture and the organization of the Sangha.[65]

The situation seemed to be that at around that time, what we called Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism etc., were in the state of emerging from the Indian mind. They thus shared the same trends of thoughts and systems.[66] It was probably much later that they became more and more distinct. And it was probably even later that they tried to differentiate themselves from each other.[67] Judging from this point of view, the dichotomy of "orthodoxy and heterodoxy" cannot really be applied. The Śramaṇic tradition should not be seen as something emerging in opposition to the Brahmanic tradition, but should be seen as an internal movement forming part of Indian religions as a whole. The movement against rituals without any knowledge of them or the attempt to internalize them was common in the Upanishadic as well as the Buddhist traditions. It should be considered rather as a trend which was in vogue in India beginning around the seventh century B.C. onward.[68]

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[65]The institutionalization of the monks seem to have a great impact in Brahmanical world. It was later followed by Śankara. See, Pande, (1983), pp. 326 ff.

[66]In *TU.*, *BAU.*, we see early efforts to systematize senses and senses organs such as the theory of the five Kośas. This can be compared with the Buddhist theory of five skandhas. In *BAU* II. 1. 17, the Vijñānamaya puruṣa can be compare to Manomaya kāya of Buddhism. There is also a reference to the concept of Grāhaka and Grāhya, which later on became one of the main tenet of the Vijñānavāsa school of Buddhism.. In this light one cannot study Hinduism without studying Buddhism and Jainism and vice versa.

[67]Since Buddhism has been mainly studied as canonical religion, the emphasis shifts more toward philosophical ideas. The secular elements in the canon is neglected. Thus if there is any trend of this popular practice, it would be assigned as residue from Brahmanism. Another trend is to emphasize the asceticism in Buddhism as against the Brahmanical tradition. But this ascetics were in Indian society, people, we may presume, were Brahmanical, but they gave food to these ascetics. It is quite common to find passages relating that the Buddha or monks went begging in a Brāhman's household. If we compare the method of preaching and arguing of the Buddha to that of the teachers in the Upanishads, we will find that they use the same methods, same metaphors.

[68]Upanishads usually emphasize the 'knowledge'. It is not enough just to perform a ritual but one has to 'know' it too. See for examples *BAU*. See also Staal, (1985), who quoted Heesterman : "Heesterman a montré, dans une série d'articles, que la tendance à s'ecarter du sacrifice animale, qui culmine dans les Upaniṣad, le Jainisme et le Bouddhisme, se trouve au sein du rituel védique lui-même; ce e'est pas un mouvement d'opposition radicale, mais une orientation inéluctable et graduelle à s'éloinger du sang répandu et de la violence. La question si débattue de l'"interiorisation" du sacrifice est un aspect de ce développement générale."

And from the same line of thinking, to dream about constructing "pure" or "primitive" Buddhism is a rather useless effort. Actually apart from scholastic philosophical differences, all religions in India seem to share three main characters and practices: Yoga, Tantra and Bhakti. By Yoga we mean meditation, Tantra, ritual and ceremony, Bhakti, devotional aspect of religion.

To approach religious situation in India by using the dichotomy between the "Greater Tradition" and the "Little Tradition" seems to complicate the issue, rather than clarify it.

In the case of Southeast Asia, the situation is even more complicated, since we have to deal with another set of practices and beliefs which are supposed to react, interact with the new religions from India. How did it happen? In what manner? Was there any perceptual changes? If the situation of India is thus described, how much more unrealistic would it be to study or to write a history of just Buddhism or Brahmanism of Southeast Asia? How many more misinterpretations would arise if we were to continue to treat them separately?

Religions seemed to be the means by which Southeast Asia received material culture such as art form, images and script from India. We cannot assume that these religions came to this region in pieces, that is to say Hinduism and Buddhism came separately. As we have shown above, they have to be considered as Indian and thus are not intrinsically different in terms of culture. Moreover, there were similarities in beliefs between these two regions as has been pointed out by Mus. But this does not suggest that these Indian beliefs have to be characteristically the same in every aspects when they arrived in Southeast Asia. There were some areas showing tendencies to express themselves more as Buddhist and the other more as Hindu. This was because political, economic and social situations were varied in different areas.

In the case of Indian religions and indigenous beliefs, to segregate people's practices that this is indigenous and that is Indian seems inappropriate. When people act or express themselves, they do not stop and think whether they act through such and such religions, nor do they think that these religions are Indian. If we ask people in Southeast Asian countries who profess Buddhism or Islam whether they are Buddhist or Islam, they will answer that they are Buddhist or Islam accordingly. But this does not guaranty that they will not propitiate spirit and do other thing considered un-Buddhistic or not strictly Islamic by scholars.

We thus can see that in studying Buddhism in Southeast Asia, Buddhism is seen either as higher religion against the "primitive, animistic" belief, or as a total system of Buddhism which has integrated every aspects of local religions. But in the latter case, the totality has to be explained by dissecting the system, as a result we have different types of Buddhism. Following this line of study, processes such as assimilation, synthesis, syncretism, subjugation have been introduced in order to elucidate the polylithic character of religious practice in India and Southeast Asia.

However, our data do not really reflect these processes mentioned above. Most of the time these terms are used without any specific definition. The most popular one is "syncretism" which suggests the combination or the effort to reconcile or integrate different beliefs. Consequently "syncretism" has to be taken as an intentional act. We do not really have any data to support that there was such an intentional effort to reconcile all these beliefs. Can we say that the "ye dharmā" stanza which is definitely Buddhistic was deliberately inscribed on the base of a Śivalinga with the intention of synthesizing or syncretizing Hinduism and Buddhism?[69] It might suggest only that the stanza was regarded as one of the best things fit for inscribing on a sacred object or it might confer sacredness on the object

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[69]See Yuyama, (1971), p. 445, footnotes 26, 27 for reference. The stanza is also found with images of Avalokiteśvara, Kubera, Mañjuśrī.

inscribed without any real conscience about its belonging to the other religion. In doing so the artist did not have any intention to reconcile the two faiths. One even can say that he did not see any difference between the two.

A recent study on Khmer reports:[70]

> Among the Khmers, there were many gods who resideed in several places, on the top of some mountains in religious foundations of villages and towns, in huge old tress, in caves, etc., and whose names might have been similar to those of Hindu gods but who were local and bore no characteristic of universality at all. The description of this concept of gods brings a statement of Stutterheim to mind about Hindu gods in Bali:
>
>> For who indeed were the gods to whom the offerings were brought? Not Śiva, nor Brahma, nor Vishnu-- at least not in the first place, nor exclusively. They were again the local gods, the deified founders of the village communities, -- sometimes bearing names that sounded like Sanskrit.
>
> It is very difficult to distinguish the indigenous and Indian elements in the religious beliefs of the Khmers. The meaning of the Indian elements is limited to what can be found in Sanskrit texts, and the difficulty remains formidable because most of the evidence we have was made to bear the appearance of Sanskritic culture. However, there is no question that religious beliefs, as well as other social institutions in Angkor, were the result of a syncretism that took place perhaps from the beginning of the contact between the two cultures. Some vestiges of the syncretic nature of Angkorean belief have been pointed out by Bhattacharya in his study of iconography, as for examples, the association of the Viṣṇu at Prasat Kravan with a crocodile or lizard or the Natarāja of Bantay Samre with two Asuras embracing his legs (seemingly inspired by autochthonous mythology). "We are on more solid ground when we confront the transformation of the nāga Ananta to a dragon, or again, the presence of the rhino as vāhana of Agni."
>
> The origins of these specific gods, beneath the names of the Hindu pantheon, were deities of local communities. They had been revered by local people before classical Indian culture arrived in Cambodia. Their names and, to a large extent, their forms were transformed in the process of Sanskritization. Even in the Angkorean period, the transformation of the names was not complete, as some gods still mentioned in the inscriptions under Khmer names.....

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[70]Nidhi Aeusrivongse's article in *Explorations in Early Southeast Asian History*, (1976), pp. 114 ff.

It is thus possible to imagine that in the process of "Indianization, " a number of local gods with the Khmer names "merged" with gods holding Hindu names, their figures (if they had any recognizable figure) being transformed to linga or even an image....

The same situation has been reported in Thailand, Burma and in the Malay world. There were of course efforts to set these local gods into the Brahmanical frame. Evidences of this type can be found in Khmer tradition in which we find not only the effort to identify the gods of Buddhism with those of Brahmanic tradition, but also local ones with the Indian. In the first case we may say that it was intentionally done by scholars who wrote the inscription:

I. vītarāgam aham vande yo'nvarthām abhidhān dadhat/
samsārasāravairāgyañ cakāra jñānasampadā//
II. bhāti vuddhaāgahemādrau cīvarārunamandalam/
māramātsaryyatamasām samhrtāv iva bhāskarah//
III. caturbhujadharam vande lokeśvaram iveśvaram/
darśayantam svavisnutvañ caturyyugadhare kalau//

I. Je salue Celui dont les passions sont parties, lui qui, portant ce nom significatif, accomplit le dépassionnement par rapport à l'essence de la transmigration, grâce à la réalisation de la Connaissance.
II. Brille sur la montagne d'or qu'est le corps du Buddha, l'orbe couleur d'aurore de la robe monastique, pour les ténèbres de la jalousie de Māra, comme le soleil lors de la destruction (du monde).
III. Seigneur (Iśvara) montrant dans l'[âge] Kali sa propre nature du Viṣṇu en Celui qui soutient les quartre Ages.[71]

But this can also be interpreted as a peaceful co-existence of these creeds in the Khmer society. Filliozat has pointed out that the concept such as 'vītarāga' and

[71] Cited in Filliozat, (1981), p. 85. (the inscription is dated 946 A.D.) The inscription referred above has two parts, the Sanskrit and the Khmer. Since the Khmer part mentions only Śiva and Viṣṇu, and not the Buddha, Coedès thinks that "à une époque où le bouddhisme ne jouait qu'un rôle assez effacé. Le texte en vernaculaire, susceptible d'être lu par un plus grande nombre de gens que le texte sanskrit, était peut-être tenu d'observer une certaine discrétion." But Filliozat asks a very pertinent question here that whether these three religions are exclusively regarded as different foreign religions, using in terms of administration, or whether this Buddhism is in reality in accord with Śaivism. He proposes another way to interpret the inscription by pointing out that apart from the name 'Buddha', there is nothing which would make the Śaivites feel hostile to the content of this inscription. Since they themselves also are also wearing a yellow robe of yati. The attribute given to Buddha such as vītarāga is also applicable to Śiva.

donning on the yellow robe would not in any way be foreign to a Śaivite. And also the identification of Avalokiteśvara and Śiva is not peculiar only to the Khmer tradition, but is also found in Java. Both received the concept from India.[72] Perhaps even in India these gods were considered as more or less the same, that is to say, as a deity deserved to be eulogized and to be trusted.

The synthesis, if we may use the word, is not so evident in the other cultures of Southeast Asia. The following description of what happened in the Thai cultural context, which is more or less also representative of the situation in other countries in Southeast Asia, can justify our reluctance to use words such as "syncretism and synthesis."

> The belief in supernatural beings is innate in man. The Thai people as a race call such supernatural beings by the generic word "phii," which includes both gods and devils. The phii, like man in general sense, are of two classes, the good phii and the bad phii. When the Thai came in contact with the highly Hinduized Khmer or Cambodians in Central Siam in the 12th century A.D. and had become a ruling race in that region, they adopted most of the Khmer Hinduized culture, especially the ruling class. Throughout subsequent centuries the Thai and the Khmer mixed racially and culturally to an appreciable degree. By this time the Thai were gradually becoming known as the Siamese and the old Thai word "phii" like its owners had also undergone a change in meaning. in the famous stone inscription of the great Siamese king Ramkamhang dated 1283 A.D. reference was made to the king of Khmer of that time as "phii fa" which literally meant the heavenly phii. Actually "phii fa" meant a divine king, a cult which had been adopted by Siamese king of later periods. Instead of referring to a divine king as "phii fa" as hitherto, it has now changed into "thep" or "thevada" from the Sanskrit "deva" and "devatā" which mean a god, or literally, a shining one. It followed that all the good phii of the Thai had by now become thevada or gods in their popular use of the language. The generic word "phii" therefore, degenerated into restricted meaning of bad phii. It now means a ghost, a devil or an evil spirit. Nevertheless the old meaning of phii in certain cases is not yet dead and still lingers in some expressions in the language. For instance, of any evil deed done in secret, we sometimes say as a warning, "men never see the evil deed done but the phii does." In order not to divulge the source of any

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[72]See Kāraṇḍavyūha, p. 264, Avalokiteśvara is described by the Buddha Sarvanīvaraviṣkambhin as follows: bhagavān āha cakṣoś candrādityāv upannau, lalāṭān maheśvaḥ, skandhebhyo brahmādayaḥ hṛdayān nārāyanaḥ ..etc. One can see the same concept of identification in the Upanishadic literature.

> formula, especially a medicinal prescription which is effective, the owner will say that the formula is "phii bok", or told by a phii, so as to give it a sacred and mystical effect. The phii here is a good phii or a thevada.
>
> The dividing line between god s and devils, like men, is a thin one which is a matter of varying degrees. Some gods are bad and some devil are good. There are, in fact, almost as many kinds of good and bad phii as there are of men. It follows therefore, that out of these phii there emerges a class whose position is on a border line between the gods and the devils. They are called "Caw phii" which means a lord or price phii but is sometimes also called theveda...[73]

These examples given above, even though they belong to different periods of time, seem to depict the same trend. In the case of the Angkorian society, we detect more syntheses than the Thai. But can we say that it was a real synthesis or syncretism? Let us take the case of 'the association of the Viṣṇu at Prasat Kravan with a crocodile or lizard etc.,' cited above as an example. The substitution of these animals may have nothing to do with a religious concept. It only shows that one who fashioned it had localized or infused his tradition in making these statues, and this might have been done unconsciously.[74]

In all these examples of the "merging" of local gods to the Hindu ones we, in fact, cannot say that the concept of local gods had been changed. Another interpretation is also possible. Since all these efforts of "merging" were initiated by the kings, they might have originated from political leanings. The king, supposed to be endowed with both spiritual and political prowess, took all the local gods and tried to unite them under his faith, the state religion.

In Khmer culture, the fertility and ancestral cults seem to have remained conceptually the same, even when there were contacts with Indian religions. We may

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[73]Anuman Rajadhon, (1986), pp. 99-100.

[74]See the next footnote.

say that they were dressed in Indian attire.[75] If concept and intention are not involved in this process, the word 'synthesis and syncretism' should not be applied.

All these approaches should be used together, and with great precaution. Evolutionism can be applied so that we can see the development of religions. However, religion is not only a set of events, it may not develop according to the theory of evolution. For example, the case of religious development in Southeast Asia did not evolve in its own course but was strongly influenced by religions from India. But this does not mean that religions from India efface local practices and beliefs. The process is profoundly complicated. There are numerous factors such as political, economic and social. And most crucial of all the perception toward religion of these people cannot be neglected. Otherwise all the processes such as syncretism etc., would exist only in the mind of scholars. And these processes would be wrong when they are applied or used for describing, explaining or stating that the religious phenomena in Southeast Asia had evolved in such and such a manner.

The problem of such Western approaches lies in ascribing names such as Hinduism, Buddhism to what scholars think it should be before really understanding

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[75]See Poirée-Maspéro, III: 701-703. Poirée-Maspéro inclines to think that all the rites concerning agriculture in Cambodia, or for that matter, in Thailand too, are of indigenous or Chinese in origin, rather than Indian. The following passage from her conclusion illustrates the situation: "Labourage et repiquage sont comparables en ce qu'ils nécessitent l'acte dangereux de déchirer le sol. Ici, nous avons deux genres de cérémonies diffeerentes: labourage royal, qui se trouve isolé par rapport à l'ensemble des rites agraires; cérémonies populaires où il s'agit toujours de propitier la terre, qu'elle soit représentée par Kroṅ Pāli, Praḥ Phum ou Praḥ Thorni. Les noms sont indiens: Kroṅ Pāli est le Roi Bali, Praḥ Thorni ou Praḥ Phum sont des désignations sanskrites de la terre, dharaṇī et bhūmi. Néanmions, les croyances et les pratiques relatives à ces divinités onyt une saveur peu indienne. Kroṅ Pāli est bien déposédédé, en trois pas, de son empire du monde, mais son association avec le nâga ou le crocodile n'est pas hindoue., et les précautions pour s'assurer de la position du nāk soutenant le monde rappellent beaucoup plus la géomancie chinoise que des pratiques indiennes, Praḥ Thorni est surtout célèbre pour avoir noyé les armés de Māra des flots issus de sa chevelure: on a montré que cette tradition est propre à l'Indochine. Quant au labourage royal, malgré les efforts des Cambodgiens, Siamois et Birmans pour lui trouver des origines indiennes, malgré l'adjontion qui lui a été faite du sacrifice du homa, il paraît avoir une origine chinoise; ne s'intégrant pas à l'ensemble des rites agraires, il pourrait être d'introduction relativement récente. En fin, les rites de la moisson - en tant qu'ils sont distincts des fêtes de mākh - sont basés sur un ensemble de croyances sur la multiplicité des âmes, celles-ci ayant pour caratéristique d'être particulièrement fuyantes. *J'ai, par ailleurs, étudié les cérémonies cambodgiennes d'appel des esprits vitaux, et montré qu'elles s'apparentaient, autant par la façon dont on les accomplit que par les croyances qui s'y rattachent, à des coutumes de la Chine d'une aprt, de l'Indonésie d'autre part, et qu'elles nee devaient, semble-t-il, rien à l'Inde.* (The italicization is mine.)

the practice of the people. This is probably due to the influence and the methodology used in the study of the Judeo-Christian religion in which the importance of the scripture is emphasized. When they look at the religions of the East, scriptures are what they first look for and according to which they form a picture. Consequently Hinduism is what has been prescribed in the Veda and other Sanskrit texts. Buddhism is a philosophical movement.[76] Later on when sociologists and anthropologists start looking at what they really are in practice, they were confronted with phenomena that lie outside the text. They see these as alien or contradicting to the text, the "Great Tradition."

These traditions are treated in these studies as something alive. But they forget one of the most crucial points; traditions get their life from people who practice them, express themselves through them and live in them. They are not something alive by themselves. If the conceptualization is not in accordance with the empirical evidence, it then does not reflect the right concept. Western scholars often run the risk of imposing such terms as Hinduism and Buddhism on local beliefs in total disregard of the real situation as lived through by the indigenous people.

We therefore can conclude that the religious situation in Southeast Asia is multi-dimensional consisting of different creeds. They seem to co-exist peacefully. There must be a favorable circumstance to allow this phenomenon to happen. The answer probably can be found in what they think about "religion."

Concept of Religion among People of Southeast Asia

All these problems can be cleared away by the understanding of how these people perceived religion. We have pointed out above that to impose the concept of monolithic religious concept as in Christianity would lead us to a distorted image of

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[76]For a study of different view on religion, and critiques on methodologies see Geertz, (1968); *ER*, XII: 282-333; Leach, (1968), pp. 1 ff.

religious situation in Southeast Asia, or actually the religions of the East as a whole. Also the pattern and paradigm which can be applied in the West are not really useful or usable.[77]

In investigating the perception towards religion of the people of Southeast Asia we shall again have to take our refuge in inscriptions and archaeological finds. And then they will be supplemented by local legends.

In the previous chapter we find that numerous inscriptions express Southeast Asian religiosity in a rather mixed manner. In terms of donors, in Dvāravatī tradition, apart from kings and the common people, we find other types of persons such as rshi, shaman, and dancers. They are all so far expressing their religious practices through the Buddhist faith without specification of any schools.

In the Khmer tradition the donors were mainly kings and their retinues. Hinduism and Buddhism sometimes were expressed side by side, sometimes intentionally syncretized as in the case of Avalokiteśvara and Śiva. However, this phenomenon is not particularly Southeast Asian or Khmer; it has happened long before in India.[78] We might as well say that the two gods were developing and mutually affecting each other.

It is worth noting that there was no direct reference concerning indigenous belief in these inscriptions except for those found in the Dvāravatī tradition. But we cannot say that it was not there. The fact that later inscriptions and the present days practices of people of Southeast Asia figure these indigenous beliefs shows that they have been established a long time ago. The evidence on local beliefs, quite amazingly, appeared in the period in which scholars believe that the influence from the Sinhalese Theravāda Buddhism has already dominated the area.

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[77]For reference see the previous footnote.

[78]See footnote 70 of this chapter.

In Burma we find that the kings still support the cult of Nats. In Thailand the "Pra Khaphung Phii which is the lord of all the Phii in this realm" had to be propitiated correctly so that the kingdom would be prosperous.[79] In an inscription on the base of an image of Śiva, known to the Thai in his other epithet, Iśvara, all the three faiths were mentioned as follows:

> In sakarāja 1432, a year of the horse, on Sunday the fourteenth day of the waxing moon of the sixth month, (when the moon had) attained the ṛkṣa of hasta, at two nālikā after dawn, Cau Brañā Srī Dharmāśokarāja founded this (statue of the) Lord Iśavra to protect the four-footed and two-footed creatures in Möan Kāmbēn Bejra, and ti help exalte the religions (śāsanā)- the Buddha's religion, the Brahmanical religion, and the Devakarma- so that they will not lose their lustre. May they function harmoniously together.[80]

In this inscription all the three beliefs or practices are listed together in a more or less equal term. The word "Devakarma" is explained by the translators of the inscription as "debakarma, Skt. devakarma, 'religious act or rite,' 'worship of the gods,' here means the cult of ancestral and tutelary divinities." They quote other inscriptions which have the same word to support their interpretation.[81]

Now let us consider what we can derive from the legends. These legends, preserved primarily in the oral tradition, were written down when Sinhalese Theravāda Buddhism has already dominated. The characteristic of them are strongly Theravāda. Nevertheless they still show reminiscence of local concepts, for instance, in the legends of the Buddha's relics, the relics were usually guarded by local gods. In Burma and Thailand usually the legends of this sort begin with the visiting of the Buddha to the site which was then a forest or a waterbody. The legends then proceed

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[79]*EHS*, IX, p. 214.

[80]*EHS*, XIV, p. 233.

[81]Ibid., p. 234, footnote 7.

with the prediction of the Buddha that such place will become a great city or a place where later his relics will be enshrined. After the prediction it is the local Devatā or a particular animal or bird would guard the place, waiting for a king or other nobles who would come and build the stūpa for the relics as predicted by the Buddha. The legends in content are of Buddhism, but in spirit they are of local tutelary beliefs.[82] This type of legend is also typical in India too. Fa xian reports numerous pilgrimages as having been predicted by the Buddha himself. And in both countries the building of the stūpa has to be instigated by a god, Indra in Indian case, local god and sometimes Indra in southeast Asian cases.[83]

Among these chronicles and legends there is a story of a princess called Cāmadevī. Its content is about the establishment of city-states in the northern part of Thailand. The chronicles tell us that four rshis had created the city of Haripuñjaya. Searching for the ruler of the city they found princess Cāmadevī of the Lavapura (Lopburi) in Central Thailand suitable for the task. They invited her to rule the new kingdom. This princess went to the new place with the Buddhist canon and Sangha together with all the artisans and craftsmen. Hence she brought civilization to the local 'uncivilized' people. Presumably they became Buddhists.

The area where this princess came from, as we have shown above, belongs to the Dvāravatī tradition where Buddhism showed strong impact. Yet the fact that the city was created by the four Rshis seems to suggest the local belief of ancestral

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[82]Swearer, (1974), pp. 75 ff.; for a study of these legends in Thailand see Wyatt, (1976); for Burma see U Htin Aung, (1962), U Tet Htoot, (1961); and also Hazra, (1986).

[83]Giles's translation, (1923), p. 13. Fa Xian writes: "Formerly when Buddha was visiting this country in company with ten of his disciples, he said to Ānanda, "When I have passed away, a king of this country by name of Kaniṣka, will raise a pagoda at this spot." Subsequently, when king Kaniṣka came into the world and was travelling about to see things, Indra, God of Heaven, wishing to originate in him the idea, caused the appearance of a little herd-boy building a pagoda in the middle of the road. "What are you making there?" said the king. "I am building a pagoda for Buddha," replied the boy. "Splendid!" cried the king; and he forthwith built a pagoda, over four hundred feet high...." See also *EB*, I, part 2, pp. 113 ff.

worship or Brahmanical aspect of the event.[84] The role of Rshi also occurs in Burmese inscription.[85]

We thus have the picture of beliefs or practices of 'different' kinds being observed and by which the people of Southeast Asia express themselves. They appear to have existed harmoniously. The best concept to describe the situation is "symbiosis" rather than syncretism or synthesis. Our picture goes very well with the conclusion drawn by Staal in his article "Paradigm Shifts and the Religions of Asia":

> The concept of religion is a Western concept, and though its origin is Roman, it has been colored by its age-long associations with the monotheisms of the West. Western religion is pervaded by the notion of exclusive truth, and it claims a monopoly on truth. It is professed by "People of the Book," in the apt phrase the Koran uses to refer to the Jews, Christians and Muslims. Scholars and laymen persist in searching for such religions in Asia. In order to identify them, they seize upon labels from indigenous categories, rent from their original contexts. Thus there arises the host of religions: Vedic, Brahmanical, Hindu, Buddhist, Bonpo, Tantric, Taoist, Confucian, Shinto etc. In Asia such groupings are not only uninteresting but uninformative and tinged with unreal. What counts instead are ancestors and teachers- hence lineages, traditions, affiliation, cults, eligibility, initiation, and injunction concept with ritual rather than truth-functional overtones. These notions do not pertain to the question of the truth, but to the practical question: What should the followers of a tradition do? (*AGNI* II, xiv).
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> If the so-called religions of Asia are not really religions, and are characterized by the fact that practice and ritual are more important than truth, belief, or doctrine, we can immediately draw some interesting conclusions. It is not possible to believe in different truths, unless they happen to be consistent with each other, but it is easy to adhere to different practices, without much restriction. If we try to do the first we are in trouble, unless we tolerate contradictions as easily as the Muslim philosopher Averroes (Ibn Rushd), who accepted for example, that the

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[84]Two of the chronicles figuring the story of Cāmadevī have been edited and translated into French by Coedès, (1925). The *Jinakālamālinī* is edited by A.B. Buddhadatta in 1962 and translated in 1968 by N.A. Jayawickrama. The name should be Jinakālamālinī, and not Jinakālamālī, as having been changed by Professor Manavidur. Judging from all the names of Pāli commentaries, the preferred form is in feminine, such as Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, Manorathapūraṇī, and for the chronicles if they do not end with 'vamsa', they also have a name in feminine form, such as Vamsatthapakāsinī. The name, therefore, should remain as it has always been in all the manuscripts.

[85]*Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya and Ava*, p. 15; *EB*, I, part 2, 113 ff.

> world was infinite on the account of reason (viz., Aristotle) and at the same time was created because of faith (viz., the Koran) (see e.g., Gauthier 1948). However, there is no difficulty in celebrating passover and attending mass-- the only caveat being that both should not occur at the same time. In Asia, it is therefore possible for a person to adhere to two 'religions.'[86]

In the case of Southeast Asia, not only people can profess or rather express themselves through two "religions" or more at the same time, but the symbols of those religions also can be represented in the same place. It is not surprising to find Śivalingas lying on the ground of a monastery in Thailand.[87] Neither is it surprising to know that the Supreme Patriarch of the Theravādin country distributed Kwan-in, a Chinese version of Avalokiteśvara among the Theravādins. Of course he did not made them himself, but the fact that he agreed and has no hesitation in distributing them as a venerable object can tell us how free the attitude toward religion or sects is. It would seem that anything they, elite and laymen, king and peasant, can trust, can be used as "religion." We might as well make a statement that for Southeast Asian people religious acts seem to be "prudential" rather than "religious" in the sense of a monotheistic religion.

However, this does not prevent different practices or rituals from having different functions. We still have to consider the case of Buddhism and Brahmanism, and both with local practices.

Influences of Indian Religions and Its Relations to Indigenous Belief

Materially speaking, it seems that Southeast Asia had a very vague concept of icons. We do not really have an example of images of deities in connection with cults or religions before the arriving of Indian civilization. However, this does not mean that

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[86]Staal, (1985), pp. 23-24.

[87]See for examples in monasteries such as Wat Pra Jetuphon etc., which are royal monastery. There is a hill near a town called Lopburi on which numerous Śivaliṅgas are found. And because of this it had been called Khau Sapphalinga (Sarvaliṅga), which later is changed to Sapphanimita (Sarvanimita) by Rāmā IV to avoid the word 'liṅga.'

the images fashioned in the Indian ways have to be recognized as Hindu gods. Most of the time they are recognized as local gods and are worshipped in the local manner. However, in most cases, Hindu or Buddhist images are recognized as such and they do not mix with the local gods.[88] It is worth noting that it would take centuries before the Southeast Asian fashion their local deities in a human form.

In Southeast Asian Buddhism we do have special images of Buddha whose sacredness is believed to be more powerful than other ordinary images of Buddha. The concept probably also originates from the concept of localization.

Perceptually, Indian creeds, especially Buddhism, seems to have introduced the multi-level system of cosmology. The Three Realms: Kāmabhūmi, Rūpabhūmi and Ārūpyabhūmi appear in mural painting. However, the Three Realms in the mind of Buddhist of Southeast Asia are Hell, Human and Heaven. And this is reflected in how they express religiously through Buddhist concept of merit making. The emphasis is on the making of merit so that one can be reborn in heaven and avoid hell.

In Southeast Asia, the concept of "making merit" and "the transference of merit" figure mainly in the Buddhist inscriptions. We thus find examples of "shaman" "rshi" making merit through the Buddhist means. The good deeds are transferred not only to the living and the deceased relatives but also to other types of spirits such as nats, devatā, phii etc. We have seen inscriptions expressing wishes from the Dvāravatī tradition in the previous chapter. Here is a typical one found in Burmese culture:

> May my ancestors before me and descendants after me, as well as my other relatives, the monks and all other men, abundantly reap the benefits of my good deed. May my two former husbands, Sinbyubin and Mingaung, partake of our merit equally to us. May every creature inhabit in every

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[88]See Souyris-Rolland, (1951); Tambiah, (1968), pp. 53-56. Anuman Rajadhon, (1986). However, we cannot totally agree with Tambiah that the 'phii' and 'thewadā' are 'two opposed supernatural categories'. For the Thai concept see Anuman Rajadhon, quoted above.

> regions, from the highest abode of *nats* to the lowest *avīci* hell, be benefited by this good deed. May our guardian *nats* also, and the guardian *nats* of the Religion, the earth, the trees, and all other *nats* of the universe, have their share of the merit....[89]

Therefore it appears that in the Buddhist area the concept is particularly derived from Buddhism. Even nowadays making merit is connected only to Buddhism. Brahmanism and spirit cults are performed for auspicious purpose and assurance rather than for making merit.

In Southeast Asia at present we may assume that Buddhism established moral hierarchy. People accept the Buddhist norms or cues as the highest authority. As we have seen above that all the spirits seem to have become Buddhist in Buddhist inscriptions.

Brahmanism on the other hand is accorded the primacy in the ritual hierarchy. Among the spirits, the phii, nats or naek ta the ones considered as good and more powerful are those which are derived from the Brahmanical or Buddhist ones.[90] Later on when Brahmanical influence from India became less and less felt, Buddhism too has attained its ascendency in terms of ritual.[91] This may be also because of the emphasis on the sacredness of monks who are considered morally higher than the Brāhmans. Nevertheless in a ceremony in Thailand one may find all three aspects at the same time: Buddhist monks chanting the paritta and being offered food for the purpose of making merit, Brahmins performing the ritual for the auspicious and the prosperity of the family or the community, spirits of all kinds being propitiated to ward

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89*Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya and Ava*, p. 34; see also pp. 14, 15, 22, 48 etc.

90Anuman Rajadhon, (1986), Tambiah, (168), pp. 53 ff.

91In Thailand this phenomenon happened especially from the establishment of this present dynasty. In the ceremony of taking the oath to the king, in the earlier period, the Brahmanical and Ancestral worship had more prominent roles. In the first reign of this dynasty, the king ordered all the officials to worship the Triratna before the other two creeds. The intensification of this trend was in process in all the subsequent reigns, especially the fourth, who prefixed the Buddhist ceremonies onto every Brahmanic ones. This would culminate in the sixth reign in the Palace Law in which a rule prescribing that a king of Thailand has to be a Buddhist is established.

off bad influences. In this case these three components would perform their duties successively. Normally the Buddhist one is the first, but sometimes the spirit cults, the simplest in form of ritual, is performed first.

Yet we cannot say that there is a rigid and distinct function among these creeds. The Buddha or a Buddha image can be propitiated in the same ways as people would do for a Brahmanical god or a local deities. People can also seek help from a monk for magical spell, or even to heal themselves from disease. It is not uncommon in Thailand to ask for a boon from a Buddhist image.

It should be noted here that inscriptions whose content is Brahmanical or Mahāyānistic usually lack these aspects related to merit making and the transferring of merit. If they are mentioned, they are usually incidental.[92] The temples and the donations of wealth, animate and inanimate, seem to have administrative and economic purposes. Of course we do not deny that these temples are religious sanctuaries. But considered from practical purposes they seem to have served also as political and economic units. We shall deal with this topic later.

So far the perception toward religion of the Southeast Asian peoples allow the multi-dimensional situation. We find different creeds co-existing. The situation can neither be described as "syncretized" nor "multi-layer." Yet we do find a prominent

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[92]Jacob (1979), summarizes the contents of inscriptions in khmer traditions in the Pre-Angkorian period, which are mostly Śaivite, as follows:

1. the date or name of the reigning king;
2. the title and nmaes of donors;
3. the name of the god;
4. names of people from whom the donor obtained land to offer to the foundation;
5. details of the price paid to those who relinquished land for the foundation;
6. the extent, location, and capacity of the donated ricefields;
7. the names of the donated salves with the indication of theri duties;
8. details of the subsistence to be given to the religious personnel;
9. details of other land given to the foundation: orchards, market gardens, etc.;
10. list of precious objects given to the foundation;
11. the statement that the revenues are to be combined with those of another foundation;
12. warning punishment for anyone using or abusing the belongings of the foundation.

The missing of the wishes and the transferring of merits is remarkable. This holds true for the subsequent periods for Brāhmanic and Mahayanistic inscriptions in this tradition.

creed which has been regarded or accorded higher status than others. This seems to suggest that there are some factors influencing the direction of the development of religions. Apart from geographical factor, the concept of kingship is the most important element.

Relations between Leader and Religion

A leader stands as the bridge between politics and religions. Based on the concept of kingship as sacred person, in "Theravāda Buddhist Sangha: Some General Observations on Historical and Political Factors in its Development," Bechert sums up the concepts impregnated in the concept of Southeast Asian kingship as follows:

> Four concepts- or rather ways of actions- of kingship have been described: first the king is *"cakravartin,"* i.e., a universal monarch as described in canonical Buddhist texts; second, he is a *"bodhisattva,"* a Buddha-to-be, an identification developed under the impact of Mahāyāna Buddhism; third, he is a promoter and protector of orthodox Theravāda like Aśoka; and forth, he is a *"devarāja,"* a god-king in the Hindu tradition. Each of these elements could be defined as ways of action: the "cakravartin" is the emperor of universal peace, the "bodhisattva' leads all being on their way to final salvation, the "new Aśoka" protects the Sangha and the holy traditions, and the "devarāja" is bound to the *rājadharma*, i.e., the moral precepts of kingship as described in Hindu sacred books, the *Purānas* and *Dharmaśāstras*, and reflected in the *"dasa rājadhamma"* of Buddhist Jataka tales. These ideas were essential for the building of the state and society in Indian Buddhist tradition, and they were very useful for the justification of state power and for charismatic appeal of the ruler, though not for practical politics.[93]

What Bechert has summarized here is probably very true to the situation. However, if it is the case that these concepts "were essential for the building of the state and society", as he contends, we have to look for the evidence not only from the leader side but also from the peoples who are his subjects. Bechert misses the central point here in conceiving these concepts as purely "Indian and Buddhist." The

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93Bechert, (Aug 1970), p. 766.

people themselves of course think that their king is sacred, but it is not certain that they would think of him as a "cakravartin," a "bodhisattva" etc. These concepts would not have functioned, if the concept of "sacred kingship" had not already existed in Southeast Asia.

The concept of "Devarāja" which developed in Khmer tradition is not Indian either. The term is a translation of Khmer words which are used as the title preceding the name of a king. In the pre-classical period, it is only in the Khmer tradition that the application of the Devarāja and the Buddharāja is prevalent. However, even with this concept, recent studies have revealed that it is not originally Indian. In the Indian concept the word "Devarāja" has never been used in the meaning of "sacred kingship", but always in the meaning of "king of the gods" which can mean either Śiva or Viṣṇu.[94] In the other traditions we do not have any evidence as to how these concepts were used to legitimize the authority of the king. We have some examples of how they resorted to religious practices as an atonement to their cruel deeds done in order to gain the power.

And a king is not considered only as a "bodhisattva" but furthermore as the Buddha. Judging from the names of kings such as "Paramatrailokanātha, Sarvajña etc." the emphasis seems to be on the quality of a Buddha rather than a bodhisattva. And the concept does not seem to have any influence from Mahāyāna. It is a pan-Buddhist concept. The tradition, however, is only evident in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia which belong to the Theravāda tradition. It is not found in the Mahāyāna countries such as China or Japan. Of course we find some instances that the Emperor of China may claim to be Maitreya, but there is no example for the claim of being a Buddha.

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[94]There are numerous articles and books on this topic. See for examples, Dupont, (1946); Filliozat, (1981); Kulke, (1978, 1986); Mabbett, (1978).

Neither should the Aśoka example be confined only to Theravāda Buddhist tradition. Kings of the Mahāyāna tradition also take Aśoka as their example. All kings that profess Buddhism do the same thing, be he, if we can say for sure, a Theravādin or Mahāyānist. All in all in the case of Thailand, the concept is connected to Rāmakirti (Rāmāyana), rather than the legend of Aśoka.[95]

Neither should the word "Dharmarāja" be confined only to the Buddhist sense. "Dharmarāja" should not be used as a concept opposing "Devarāja." The word used in the scripture of course means the Buddha. But other creeds of India also use the word for any just king. When the word is used in Southeast Asia for a king, it is used together with other qualities which cannot be delineated as Buddhist or Brahmanical. In a sense the epithet seems to connect with Yama, rather than the Buddha.

In tracing back the concept of kingship in Southeast Asia, indigenous concept was rather enhanced by the Indian concepts. When they used these Indian religions to legitimize themselves, it was the ritual, and not the concept, that really mattered. In the king's name all the qualities figuring in Brahmanical, Buddhist and local traditions form equally crucial part. However, people scarcely use or call the king by his real name. They, out of respect, do not dare to do so, but refer to the king by his title. These titles, however, are different from culture to culture, yet they reflect the same tendency of thought. A king is seen as the Lord of Lives, of Land, and as the Protector.[96]

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[95]The two epics, Rāmakirti and Uniauddha (story of Aniruddha from the Mahābhārata) are considered by Rāmā the first as necessary for the nation, even if they are not Buddhist. He then cautioned at the end of the text that this not to be considered as the highest norm, one should pay more attention to the Buddha's teaching.

[96]There is no study on the title of king in Southeast Asian languages. We have tried to interview peoples from different cultures of Southeast Asia, but most of them have more or less lost this institution. The data presented here, therefore, have to be verified and further studied.

Burma. (Informant: Kyaw Soe, East West Center, University of Hawaii)
In normal conversation the king is referred to as Ba Yin, Shin Ba Yin.
Shin = the owner and the master.
Officially or in a historical document:
1. Ba Yin Min Myat

The "way of action" proposed by Bechert may be valid, in terms of scholarly approach. For the people the king is always perceived as a god, and most of the time without even paying any attention to identify which god. All these ways of action are actually the same expressions through different beliefs. But the concept is the same. The king is seen as the center of all the constitutions and institutions of a nation or a tribe. This leads us to a rather doubtful idea that the king uses concepts from a religion to legitimize his claim of power. The religion used in the context will become the "state religion."

However, the definition of "state religion" as the religion which has been used to legitimize the political power is rather dubious in the context of Southeast Asia polity. It was, or still is, common that the monarch would endow himself with all the

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Myat is the word signifying higher, nobler status
2. Ba Yin Min Tayar Gyi
Min = king; Tayar = just; Gyi = great.
3. Min Gyi = The Great One (this is the most common one in history books.)

Malay. (Informant: Christ Ng, East West Center, University of Hawaii.)
1. Rāja (sanskrit);
2. Sultan;
3. Agung = the king of kings, the best, the first;
4. Tuan ku = the master (Ten gu = the king's son)

Indonesian. (hedina Utarti, East West Center, University of Hawaii.)
1. Rāja;
2. People referred to the king as Gusti which, the informant thinks, is a Sanskrit word; (Gusti Allah = God; Gusti Panguan = teh prince, my master);
3. Officially, the king is referred to as Sri Sultan; Sri Susuhuna (the on that I lift) (suhun = to lift);
4. In court language = Sihunan = the one who was lifted. [Compare this to the court language of the Thai; Thun Kramom = the one whom I place above my head.]

Cambodian. (IT, III: 78; 96; 128; 151 etc.)
1. Kamrateṅ añ; Vrah Pād (pāda) Kamrateṅ añ;
2. Dhulī Vrah Dhulī Jeṅ Vrah Kamrateṅ añ; (Jeṅ = Pāda.)
3. Vrah Pād kamrateṅ Kamtuan añ.

Thai.
1. Pho Khun (The Chief who is the Father; the word is used in Sukhothai period, the thirteen century. One can also find the Cambodian title used for a Thai king in the inscriptions which sometimes were written in Khmer.)
2. Khun Luang (The Great Chief; common word used in Ayuthya period, the fourteenth century.)
3. Prah Chao Phendin (The Lord of the land); Prah Mahākasat (Mahākṣatriya.)
4. Chao Jīvit (The Lord of Life); Chao Nue Hua (The Lord above the head.)
5. Officially, Prah Pād (pāda) Samdet Prah Chao Yu Hua. (The Lord above the people's heads.)

Most of these titles are in vernacular languages. If the inscription are in Sanskrit, the king's name is usually preceded by "śrī," without any title.

qualities inspired by Buddhism and Brahmanism. This trend is evident throughout the history of Southeast Asia. The effort to become more Buddhist is evident in Thailand, but this was as late as the nineteenth century.

The relationship between the king and these three aspects of religion of Southeast Asia can be divides as follows: as a Buddhist, he is the foremost among the laymen, protector of the faith; as a supporter of Brahmanism, he presides over the ceremonies for the welfare of the nation and the people; and in the case of indigenous beliefs, he propitiates the spirits for the welfare and the properties of the country. The king's preferable faith becomes symbolically the dominant creed, subsuming other creeds. It should also be noted that there exists a close relation between king and people. He is acting also as their spiritual leader. Actually almost everything concerning kingship seem to be spiritual or symbolic even when the king claims to be the owner of all the land. In this manner the king affects his people by his personal belief and at the same time he does not impose his personal creed on his people. One may say that actually these two components of the concept of kingship, a king being both political and spiritual leader, are not separated in the mind of the people of Southeast Asia. Consequently what the king believes or practices always becomes acceptable by the people. It is regarded as the highest form of beliefs and practices. But as we have shown above that the king himself does not strictly adhere to a particular creed, and the people also have the freedom to adopt any creeds which are not hostile to the king.

Thus apart from being the main factor in the accepting of faiths, the selection to use different creeds in different fields of a king also affects the structural distribution of religions in Southeast Asia. We have pointed out in the third chapter that this phenomenon was partly due to the shift in the commercial route beginning from the seventh century. However, the crucial factor is probably the king of the Khmers, Chams and Java had appropriated the social and political concepts of Mahāyāna

Buddhism and Brahmanism. The coming of these two cultures should not be considered separately. As we have pointed out, they should be taken as Indian. And where there was Mahāyāna Buddhism, there was also strong influence of Brahmanism. Most of the time they appeared in the same context in the same inscription and sanctuary.

Given all the evidence we will try to reconstruct Buddhism by setting it against historical fact. It is generally accepted as a historical fact that the Khmers, the Chams and the Javanese had become more politically united, as it is now called the "great mandala" by scholars. In creating this political unity, these kings made extensive use of Brahmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Kenneth R. Hall and other scholars have studied this type of impact.[97] He sees the situation as an economic one. The temples built by the Khmer kings were used also as economic units. Through the temples the king established the administrative unity in his land. Hall, using the evidence provided in the inscriptions in Khmer and Java traditions, develops a model of functioning of the Khmer and Javanese temple hierarchies and discusses the temples's role in the political and economic development and integration of the Khmer state. He proposes that there was a three-tier hierarchy of temples: the central, regional and the local. The central one directly associated with the king himself. It stood as the central creed under which the regional temples of different deities were subsumed. The regional temples were probably the abodes of deities worshipped by petty kings who became vassals of the Khmer sovereignty. Village temples then connected the regional community to that of the local agricultural communities. In this manner the king of the Khmer tradition integrated his empire. This idea of hierarchical connection among deities of different ranks is not so different from that proposed by Mus.

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[97]Kenneth Hall, (1985); Welch, (Mar 1989).

This political and economic aspects is best summed up by Welch:

> Southeast Asian leaders legitimized their rule primarily through spiritual prowess, guaranteeing the prosperity of the society. These leaders saw the construction and endowment of temples as the foremost means of ensuring such prosperity. The provisioning of temples with endowments of land, labour, and resources made possible the development of an economic system centred on these temples. Temples became local storage and redistribution centres and provides a sanctioned means by which resources and capital could be accumulated and labour mobilized, permitting the development of underutilized lands. Elite family cemented political alliances and helped legitimized the subordination of one local area to another centre by sharing in the giving of gifts. Regional elites expanded their power by consolidating land management under the authority of regional temples.[98]

Even if there is no evidence to support such development of using temples as political and economic units in the Dvāravatī or the Pyu traditions, we might surmise that monasteries in those traditions must also have served this purpose. They at least were the center of a town or a city. But they apparently had never strongly been used in that manner. Both traditions remained loosely connected by cultures rather than by politics. S. Vallibhotama thinks that not until the Khmer culture, and consequently Brahmanic and Mahāyānistic cultures, penetrated into these areas that these cities were brought into close contact.[99]

The reason why the Khmer and the Javanese traditions made use of Brahmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism was at around the eighth century Brahmanism and Mahāyāna were at their height of activities. Java was in the main sea route and always in close connection with the Khmer and the Cham. In fact Jayavarman II who established the Khmer Great mandala was reported as having spent his time in Java.[100] The archipelago was always prone to the changing tide from outside. The

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[98]Welch, (Mar 1989), p. 14.

[99]S. Vallibhotama, (1986), pp. 234-235.

[100]Coedès, (1968), p. 97.

impact of Mahāyāna and the revival of Brahmanism was felt first in this area, and then spread up along the sea route to Champa and Cambodia. The same situation occurred again when Islam started spreading eastward from India. The Cham which maintained close connection with Java also became Islam.[101] But in Cambodia in the thirteenth century A.D. impacts from Thailand were greater, therefore, Cambodia at that time onward was influenced by the religious situation in Thailand rather than from Java.

In fact what is crucial here is not the religion chosen but rather the application of a religion in accordance with the king's purpose. From this point of view the much debated issue concerning this or that king being Brahmanic or Buddhist should be dropped. They probably supported both creeds, and very probably did not see much difference between them, since both appeared side by side in inscriptions. In some inscriptions a king might express himself as a Buddhist, in some, Brahmanic. Whatever religion he chose, the application was dictated more by political and economic goals rather than doctrinal.

The fact that Khmer Empire became organized and expanded to a vast area, Dvāravatī and perhaps as far as Pyu circle affected the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. Even if the Khmer sovereignty was short-lived, and constantly waxed and waned, its impacts were strongly felt culturally. Yet we do find evidence that Buddhism in Dvāravatī, especially the Sthavīra schools persisted side by side with other creeds. At least Sūryavarman recognized it in his inscription.

Historically, we may say that Mahāyāna Buddhism had become national or state religions before Hīnayāna Buddhism. They left more substantial evidence in the much heavily studied area of Indochina. This circumstance leads some scholars to arrive at a sequential pattern of the development of religions beginning with various schools of Hīnayāna, most of the time, excluded Pāli Buddhism, followed by the

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[101]Mabbett, (1986).

flowering of Brahmanism and Mahāyāna and culminating in the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism from Sri Lanka.[102]

As we have shown above Theravāda, very probably emanating from Sri Lanka, has been in the area as early as any other schools. In fact, it left more material in terms of scriptural texts than any others combined. However, the influence seemed to be strong only in the areas which are now Lower Burma and Central part of Thailand. In this case Mahāyāna Buddhism seems to have reached these areas from the west through the expansion of the Khmer culture. Of course, there is no doubt that some had been directly from India or Sri Lanka. In any case, Mahāyāna Buddhism, Brahmanism had never really been prominent in these areas. But it is evident that Brahmanism was used politically in Dvāravatī and Pyu cultures. This may be because of the science of governing and ritual are far more elaborate and sophisticated in Brahmanism than in Theravāda Buddhism or Buddhism in general.[103]

All these combined give the whole view of religiosity of Southeast Asia. People perceive religions as the best thing they can trust. They are all auspicious and are used in everyday life in different ways. "Religion" in Southeast Asia is a compound phenomenon. It cannot be seen only a "religion" but as a phenomenon intertwining with the political concept such as kingship and other social components.

We thus can conclude that because of the perception toward religion, the religious situation of Southeast Asia was and has been polylithic. Scholars should not be afraid to say that the religious situation in Southeast Asia is composed of different "religions." And the practices are in most cases reveal strong influences of indigenous beliefs, especially "animism." The concept of professing to the one and only religion is quite foreign to the mind of Southeast Asia. For them there is no need

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[102]Michael Aung-Thwin, (1985); Guillon, (1984); Saddhatissa, (1972).

[103]Coedès, (1968), p. 33.

to synthesize these beliefs into one. Neither can these beliefs and practice be seen as having clearly distinctive functions in the society. They can be seen as hierarchical. But the one which is accorded the highest status by no means debases the others. Just as we see in the Buddhist society of Southeast Asia nowadays that the Buddhist monks would ignore the practices that are not in accord with the Buddhist norm, but never really try to stop people from performing them. It is more like a piece of cloth weaved with gold and silver thread, adorned with jewels, these materials never really mix together, yet they form the same piece of cloth. The word which probably best describes the relations among all these beliefs is "symbiosis" rather than "synthesis" or "syncretism" which involves deliberate efforts in reconciling different beliefs.[104]

However, the development of these beliefs did not occur without direction. There were numerous dynamics or factors such as the concept of kingship, the political, economic and social circumstances which helped unite different concepts to form the totality of the religiosity of Southeast Asia.

The concept of kingship perceived as the symbol of the nation and its people provides the frame in which rituals and morality of different beliefs can operate together. This is supported by the concepts of morality and rituals which are perceived hierarchically.

Political, economic and social circumstances differentiated the zones whereby different religions from India created different impacts. In the West of Southeast Asia, people identify themselves as Buddhists. They do not have the concept of different schools of Buddhism. Of course the king or learned monks sometimes note the difference in minor practices and try to standardize them. It is regarded as a

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104When Christianity and Western concept on "religion" penetrate through Southeast Asian culture we then see the purist aspect. People become more serious on the issue. As now in Thailand, there have arisen movements to purify the religion. Being a Thai is being Buddhist only as a reaction to the Roman Catholic Church who declared that it will try to convert more people. This is the latest religious phenomenon in Thailand unprecedented before in this society.

degradation of what should be observed, and not as different forms of Buddhism. The purification of the śāsanā is not motivated by doctrinal but rather by practical considerations. If one asks a Southeast Asian Buddhist what his "śāsanā" is, the answer will always be Buddha-śāsanā. But if one asks further whether he is a Theravādin or a Mahāyānist, one will not get an answer, since the question does not make sense in his mind. A serious question one should ask here is that in this circumstance can we call these so-called "Theravāda Buddhist countries", Theravāda Buddhist at all?

CHAPTER 6

"THERAVĀDA" BUDDHISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: ITS CHARACTERISTICS, HISTORY, AND ASCENDENCY

In the previous chapters we have dealt with the issues concerning the history of Buddhism in general. And the conclusion we have arrived at is that Buddhism in the area represented part of the whole complex system of beliefs and practices, including Buddhism, Brahmanism and indigenous beliefs. All these components appeared to have been accepted by Southeast Asian peoples, and have been used to accommodate their different needs.

Before we start examining the history of Theravāda Buddhism proper, historical issues from the preceding chapters about Theravāda Buddhism up to the eleventh century when countries in mainland Southeast Asia were labelled as Theravāda Buddhist states should be addressed. Then the account of how Theravāda Buddhism "was introduced" into these countries will be examined.

However, the picture of Theravāda Buddhism would not be complete, if we did not take into account all the scholarly works which have been done in recent years on Theravāda Buddhism. Even if these are mainly studies of the present situation of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia, scholars have incorporated into them historical background and doctrinal aspects of Buddhism in order to substantiate and explain the phenomena occurring in Theravāda Buddhism of Southeast Asia in their works.

The problem here is whether these historical data and the doctrinal points used have been carefully examined before or not. In many cases we find that these facts

are just the received versions of the history of Theravāda Buddhism or distorted concepts about Buddhism, used without verification. Therefore, we have to examine these works and their conclusions in order to have a better understanding of the present state of the scholarlship.

Issues concerning the character of Theravāda Buddhism

The first issue is the confusion between Theravāda Buddhism and "primitive Buddhism." Theravāda Buddhism may be the closest or the most conservative form of Buddhism preserved. Consequently, it has been regarded as the purest form of Buddhism, devoid of all the irrational substances. But this is a result of looking only at the scripture, and not the real situation in the Theravāda Buddhist countries.[1]

Beliefs and practices in Theravāda Buddhist countries are composed of both indigenous and Indian cultures. In the context of Southeast Asia we do not have to ascribe everything which has "popular" strain in Theravāda Buddhism to the influnce of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Neither can Brahmanism be treated separately from other beliefs coming from India. All these different channels of "religious" expression should be considered as being co-existent.

It is typical to find a book on Theravāda Buddhism describing Theravāda Buddhism as in Spiro's *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and Its Burmese Vicissitudes*.[2] Since it represents typical misunderstandings about the actual situation in these Theravāda Buddhist countries, we shall quote from it extensively :

> Normative Buddhism, as is well known, is currently expressed in two major forms: Mahāyāna and Theravāda. ..... With its numerous saints and saviors, its masses for the dead, its elaborate and ornate rituals, Mahāyāna Buddhism-the Buddhism of the Great Vehicle-is related to Theravāda Buddhism-the Buddhism of the Elders-much as Catholicism

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[1]See Leach, (1968), pp. 1-6.

[2]Spiro, (1982).

is related to Protestantism. Lacking saints and saviors, and possessing a few simple rituals, the latter form of Buddhism is found primarily in Southeast Asia....

In his discussion of the Buddhist creeds, J. H. Bateson (1911) summarizes the teachings of Buddhism in the following five concepts: materialism, atheism, pessimism, nihilism, and egoism. To this conceptual set, I would like to add one more concept, viz., world-renunciation, the attitudinal and behavioral consequence of subscribing to the above set. Even a brief discussion of these doctrines will indicate how unusual they are when taken as the defining doctrine of a *religious* traditions.

Materialism. Contrary to almost every other religion, one of the foundation stones of Buddhism is the doctrine of nonsoul. Man is an aggregate of five material factors and processes which, at death, disintegrate without residue. The belief that behind these material processes there exists some spiritual or incorporeal essence-a soul-which guides and directs behavior and which survives the dissolution of the physical body, is a Buddhist heresy. The building block of the world, and of man, is the atom. Man, like the rest of the world, consists of atoms in motion.

Atheism. Buddhism is a religion without a God. just as the body has no soul which guides and directs its action, so the universe has no creator who brought it into being, who guides its course, or who presides over the destiny of man. More important, there is no Being-no savior God-to whom man can turn for salvation. Each man, as it were, must save himself. Durkhiem (1954:29-32), it will be recalled, was so impressed with the Buddhist example that he argued that the belief in God could not be used as a defining characteristic of "religion." Other scholars, themselves the products of eighteenth-century Enlightenment and of nineteenth-century rationalism, found the precursors of these latter movements in Buddhism.....

Nihilism The doctrine of no-soul is intimately associated with a second building stone - the doctrine of impermanence. According to Buddhism everything in the universe, including the universe itself, is impermanent. There can be no supreme reality because anything that is "real" - anything that exists-is in perpetual flux, in a constant state of creation and dissolution, of coming into and passing out of existence. But Buddhism makes an even more radical claim- and this is a second meaning of Buddhist nihilism: even if there were some permanent reality, perhaps some condition of immortality, it is not a condition to which man ought aspire. Rather than aspiring to an eternal existence, the Buddhist (in theory) aspires to the extinction of existence...[3]

[3]This statement need to be substantiated. For normal people these trilakṣana are in their mind and apply to situations to remind themselves not to attach to much and thus not inflict their thought. They are rather functional, and not a reality per se. Nirvana is sometimes also described positively.

> *Pessimism.* Buddhist nihilism is reasoned, not capricious. Just as Calvinism teaches that there is no conceivable act of even the most righteous man which is not sinful (in the sight of God), so Buddhism teaches that there is no conceivable act of even the happiest man which is not painful (when analyzed in the crucible of Buddhist meditation). Associated with the doctrines of non-soul and impermanence, the doctrine of suffering forms the famous Buddhist trinity. From the lowest hell to the highest heaven suffering is as inescapable and essential attribute of life. Since so long as there is life there is suffering, the only reasonable goal to aspire to, according to Buddhism, is the extinction of life as we ordinarily understand it.[4]
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> *Renunciation.* Religions not only take different attitudes to the world, but these attitudes vary systematically with their basic doctrines of salvation. Thus, religion may accept the world, viewing it as not incompatible with its soteriological goal; it may be indifferent to the world, viewing it as irrelevant to that goal; it may reject the world, viewing the latter as the major obstacle to attainment of that goal. The last attitude, the rejection of the world, may lead, as Weber has shown, to such diverse responses as innerworldly asceticism, mysticism, and otherworldly asceticism. (Weber 1946:323-58) Buddhism is a religion, par excellence, of asceticism. ... By renouncing the world, the Buddhist aspires to detachment from persons, from material possessions, and even from himself.[5]

All these points described by Spiro who quoted and elaborated Bateson seem to have deviated from the Buddhist texts in general. The account is inaccurate both in doctrinal and historical developments.[6]

First of all, we cannot see the point on comparing Theravāda Buddhism and Mahāyāna Buddhism to Catholicism and Protestantism. If the comparison is possible perhaps, the situation would be the other way around.

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[4]In the Indian concept the ending of transmigration is not the extinction of life but the extinction of becoming or being reborn. In Indian philosophy life of a being is endless, if he does not break the wheel of samsāra. Spiro's phrasing here is rather misleading.

[5]Spiro, (1982), pp. 7-9.

[6]See Bellah, (1968), pp. 412-413; Staal, (1985), pp. 41-42.

Doctrinally, in Buddhism, "man" is not the aggregate of five material factors. We do not know whether he means the Five Elements *viz.*, earth, water, fire, wind and air, or the five skandhas. Whatever the case may be, what is called "man" in the Buddhist texts, be it Theravāda or Mahāyāna is described as the aggregate of five skandhas. The material part is only one member which derives its form from the basic Five Elements. The rest, four in number, have the nature of what is called "mind" or the psychological function. The Buddha did not teach that this aggregate will disappear without any residue after death. If it is so there can be no transmigration, and for that matter no use for the renunciation and salvation.

Neither is renunciation the cutting out of the world and society. Rather, the monastic system reintroduced the wandering śramaṇa back to the society.[7] Buddhist monks, especially those of the Theravāda tradition always live close by or in the city. The Vinaya rules can serve as evidence to show how much the Sangha care about what the people think about them.[8] Surely we cannot say "Buddhism is a religion, par excellence, of asceticism. ... By renouncing the world, the Buddhist aspires to detachment from persons, from material possessions, and even from himself." Of course Buddhism teaches people to be detached from the defilement. But detachment does not mean negation or rejection of society. Monks still live together as a community. In the Theravāda Buddhist countries, monasteries serve as centers for the whole community. Its role in a town or a village is almost equal to a town hall.[9] To renounce the world only means to free oneself from such bondage as exessive

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[7]Staal, (1985), p. 46.

[8]See I. B. Horner, (1938), p. xxix. "Historically, the success of the Early Buddhist experiment in monasticism must be in great part attributed to the wisdom of constantly considering the susceptibilities and criticisms of the laity."

[9]Lester, (1973), chapters 5 and 6; and also (1987), chapter 4.

material possessions, family business, so that one can pursue the goal. It is not forced on every Buddhist to renounce the world.

Spiro accepts these points using them as the basis to look at a Theravāda Buddhist society. Of course, he detects some discrepancies in the account given above when he compares it to the real situation in Burma. Sometimes he even contradicts himself. His definition of normative and non-normative becomes so confusing in such a statement: "...and having discovered in my Burmese research that the doctrines of normative Buddhism only rarely constitute the Buddhism of the faithful, I also discovered that the latter have acquired other additional forms of Buddhism which for them are equally, or nearly equally, normative.."[10] What he concludes, as do other scholars, is that Burmese supernaturalism, and for that matter that of other Theravāda Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia, is a separate system from Buddhism of Southeast Asia. It survives in these traditions because Buddhism, especially Theravāda, lacks this aspect which is crucial to the simple needs of the masses. For him anything supernatural is not Theravāda Buddhism. He sees supernaturalism as something which is missing in Buddhism, saying:

> Agreeing that Burmese are separate systems, an earlier generation of Western scholars concluded, as we have seen, that the former was the "true" religion of the Burmese. It is primarily because Buddhism, at least in its Great Tradition aspects, abdicates almost all concern for worldly goals, that they mistakenly (in my opinion) perceived Buddhism to be nothing but a veneer. Scott, for example, had no doubt but that this was the case because, he observed, when a Burman want to build a house, launch a boat, plough or sow his fields, start on a journey, make a purchase, marry a wife himself, or marry his daughter to another, bury a relation, or even endow a religious foundation, it is the spirits he propitiate, it is the nats whom he consults (Scott 1921:390)
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> Although Scott's generalization is true, his conclusion is false. For the Burman consults the nats, not in *defiance* of Buddhism, but in *default* of Buddhism. Orthodox Buddhism, neither as a philosophy nor as religion, has anything to say about these mundane matters. Since the world and

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[10]Spiro, (1982), p. 11.

> its affairs have nothing to do with salvation, Buddhism, as a salvation religion, has nothing to do with them.[11]

In fact supernaturalism is quite common in Theravāda Buddhism, both in the texts and in practices. It is not something foreign and unacceptable even to what scholars called "normative" Buddhism. The best examples are the sūtras such as Mahāsamayasutta, Ratanasutta and Āṭānāṭiyasutta. The first one contains nothing doctrinal but list of gods and demons.[12] The second is a mantra taught to the monks in order that they can help pacify an epidemic in Vesali.[13] The last sutta originates from the fact that forest monks were haunted by bad spirits. In order to help these monks, a form of "mantra" then was related to the Buddha by Kubera, the protector of the Northern region so that the Buddha can trasmit this spell to the monks.[14] These sutras are commonly recited by monks in a Buddhist ceremony. Therefore, if supernaturalism means something concerning ghosts, spirits and sorcerers, it can be found scattered in the Buddhist canon as shown by Masson.[15]

The situation in Burma is also more or less true in Thailand. But it should not be seen as a result of the default of Buddhism that supernaturalism remains.[16] Rather it is because supernaturalism forms part of the belief system of the Southeast Asian people. It is permissible as something that can provide assurance, auspiciousness,

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[11]Spiro, (1967), p. 271.

[12]*DN*, II: 253-262. See *DPPN*, II: 564-565. Malalasekera describes the structure of this sutta as having three parts. The first consists of a long list of devas which also can be found in the Mahāvastu (I:245; III: 68,77). In the latter, Śiva is added. The list consists of numerous strange names which cannot be identified. They are probably local deities, spirits etc. Both should be compared to the list in the Āṭānāṭiyasutta. The second part consists of a list of devas, giving exhortations to monk concerning Māra. And Māra declared that he had no power over an arhat. The third consists of verses of greeting spoken by the devas from the Suddhāvāsā.

[13]The sutta can be found in the Khuddakapāṭha, and also in Suttanipāta (verses 222-38).

[14]DN, III: 194 ff.

[15]Masson, (1942).

[16]Spiro, (1967), p. 271.

and protection. People would not feel reluctant to invite monks to chant the "paritta" before performing spirit possession ceremony or a bloody sacrifice. Of course, the monks would leave before the possession ceremony or the sacrifice begins. When asked, they said that the power of the Buddha's words would protect them from being harmed by bad spirits. On the other hand it is common in any paritta reciting ritual that the monks would call for all the spirits and gods to come and hear the recitation.[17] It is therefore not surprising that we find in inscriptions of the fifth century shamans, sorcerers or a rshi patronizing the casting of the Buddha's image. Neither is it surprising that the Brahmans in Thailand would invite monks to chant paritta before starting Brahmanical ceremony.

On the other hand, people, professing that they are Buddhists do not feel guilty to propitiate Buddha or special images of Buddha as a god who has the power to grant boons and ward off bad omens. In Thailand there is a tradition of seeking and paying homage to the monk who is believed to have attained spiritual attainment. This is considered to be one of the great meritorious acts. However, instead of seeking his meditational or moral advice, most of the time, people go there believing that just seeing him is a great merit or they just wish to receive some amulets from him. In fact sometimes an important Buddha's image or a holy monk is being imposed upon by the duty of healing people, a practice prohibited in the Vinaya rules.

The situation is also evident in Sri Lanka, considered to be the cradle of the most orthodox form of Theravāda Buddhism. Bechert describes the problem caused by applying terms such as "folk religion," "popular cults," as follows:

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[17]Here is one of the version usually recited before the actual paritta recitation begins, (the stanzas are given out of my memory):

> sagge kāme ca rūpe girisikharataṭe cantalikkhe vimāne
> dīpe raṭṭhe ca game taruvanagahaṇe gehavatthuṃhi khette
> bhummā cāyantu devā jalathalavisame yakkhagandhabbanāgā
> tiṭṭhantā santike'yaṃ munivaravacanaṃ sādhavo me suṇantu.

> Another terminological problem is created by the words "popular religion" or "folk religion" if used in this context. Some of the cults of the gods in Sihalese tradition were definitely not "popular" cults, but formed part of established system of state ceremonies and state ritual of the Sinhalese kingdom. This does not contradict the fact that Buddhism was the state religion, because....such rituals, though considered essential for the prosperity of king, state and nation could not be performed by bhikkhus because of the "supra-mundane" function of the sāsana.[18]

Spiro then classifies Buddhism into four kinds: Nibbanic, Kammatic, Apotropic and Esoteric Buddhism.[19] But how would these Buddhism-s be understood since it is practiced by all classes of people, even the king and the elites themselves. One who is pursuing Nibbanic Buddhism can very well use or apply Buddhism kammatically, apotropically or even esoterically. On the other hand one who is pursuing the Kammatic Buddhism cannot be labeled as not thinking of Nibbanic aspect of Buddhism. His final goal would always be nirvana. It might be postponed because he thinks that his merit has not yet attained a sufficiently high level.

Even in Monastic Buddhism which in principle is supposed to be the purest form, the "popular" beliefs can be detected. Because monks also belong to the masses, they are ordained from the common people whose interest is not always to attain nirvana but to gain merit, to get education, or sometimes to make a living or to create their ways to the upper level of society.[20] They are not lacking strains of supernaturalism. This fact is not only true to Southeast Asian tradition, but has always been true even in India, and in the case of Buddhism, probably even true during Buddha's lifetime.

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[18]Bechert, (1976), p. 221. See also Ames, (Jun 1964), Bechert, (1973, 1978), Pfenner, (1962), Piker, (1968).

[19]Spiro, (1982), p. 11-14.

[20]Lester, (1973), chapter 6; Tambiah, (1976), chapter 14 : Monkhood as an Avenue of Social mobility.

What appears in the scripture is a part of Buddhism, but not the whole. A living "religion" cannot be said to be "alive", if we neglect the actual situation, brought into life by ones who profess it. And we cannot say that this latter aspect of Buddhism is not "normative." The Buddhist norms are always used and applied in all cases, if there is a need for them. It is no less Buddhism, compared to the one in the scripture of which most of the time certain features are overemphasized or undermined as having been shown above. Actually, it is more real to the present situation of Buddhism in Southeast Asia than what is called "normative Buddhism."

The approach was somewhat improved in the works of Bechert and Tambiah. But again the dichotomy or the problems raised also are pseudo-problems. Tambiah in trying to set the principle for studying Theravāda in Southeast Asia, especially in Thailand, uses a new approach: the socio-historical one. His contribution to the methodology in studying Buddhism in Southeast Asia is that he makes use of both synchronic and diachronic approaches. Tambiah in his book, *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand,* explains the relation between the non-Buddhist tradition and the Buddhist one as "reciprocity."[21] His approach is to explain the dynamics involved in the belief system in "Buddhist village society". To interpret the relationships between these beliefs, he applies synchronic categories of opposition, complementarity, linkage, and hierarchy. And to the development of these beliefs together, he uses diachronic categories of continuity and transformation.[22] And yet he cannot really divorce himself from the dichotomy of the "Great and Little traditions." In chapter 14 of the book, he sets out to explain "the Co-existence of the 'Brahman' and the Buddhist monk". What he explains can be quoted as a typical misleading presentation of the case.

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[21]See chapter 14: The Co-existence of the 'Brahman' and the Buddhist Monk, and the following chapter.

[22]Frank Reynolds, (1978).

> The term for the sukhwan officiant, *paahm*, etymologically derives from *brahman*; alternatively he is called *maukhwan* (expert in *khwan* rites). It is the first term that acts as a cue beckoning us to investigate further.
>
> The *brahman* and the *bhikkhu* were in their country of origin, India, unaccommodating antagonists; the *brahman* did in time virtually eliminate the Buddhist monk while incorporating in his religion some of the ethical achievements of Buddhism. The questions that therefore spring to mind are: how is it that the *brahman* and the *bhikkhu* can co-exist peacefully in Thai society? What different circumstance experiences by the *brahman* and *bhikkhu* in further India have made possible this co-existence? Finally, what is the connection between the classical *brahman* priest and the contemporary village *paahm* or *maukhwan*?[23]

His explanation and reasoning seem to be very sound. But Tambiah's theory here depends on one crucial point, the identification of this "paahm" as brahman. He is right in saying that *etymologically* it derives from the Indian word. But we do not have any evidence that *conceptually* it is derived from Brahmanism. The word "paahm" might have been used as an elite form for the original "maukhwan."

Now the concept of "khwan" is not an Indian concept. It is a vital force in the human body, and yet it is not what we call "vijñāna" in the Indian philosophical tradition. When the Thai embraced Buddhism, they also used the concept of "vijñāna". Tambiah himself describes their meaning in a Thai context correctly as follows:

> The concept of *khwan* and *winjan*, both expressing the notion of spiritual essences connected with the human body, are difficult to define and describe.
>
> Taking *khwan* first: some writers have rendered it as 'life soul'; other as 'benevolent guardian spirit of an extremely ephemeral essence'. The villagers' characterization of *khwan* subsumes a number of ideas: the *khwan* resides in the human body; it is attached to the body and yet can

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[23]Tambiah, (1980), p. 252.

leave it. The causes and consequences of the *khwan*' s departure are formulated in a circular manner: The *khwan* takes flight and leaves its owner's body (*cao khong*) when he is frightened, sick or in trouble, or *caj bau dee* (mind not good). The very act of its fleeing the body in turn exposes the owner to suffering, illness and misfortune.

The *khwan* must be understood in relation to *winjan*. The *winjan* is also a spiritual essence and also resides in the body. But it is different from *khwan*. The *khwan* can leave the body temporarily, thereby causing illness, but it can be recalled and mental and physical health thereby restored. At death the *khwan* leaves the body for good, followed by the *winjan*. The *winjan* leaves the body only with death. In fact, death is described as the escape of *winjan* from the body. After death, people are not concerned with the *khwan*, only with the fate of *winjan* and its subsequent transformation.[24]

Tambiah concedes that "It is apparent that there is complementarity and opposition implied by this pair of concepts."[25] Thai people probably can agree with him on the first aspect, but they probably have never thought that "khwan and winjan" are opposing forces. In fact Tambiah himself finally says that "The Thai villager thus conceptually distinguished two spiritual essences. This duality does not fit into simple 'body/soul' dichotomy; if we are to fit the Thai notions we can say that two aspects of the 'soul' are distinguished. *While the villager makes the conceptual distinction, he becomes highly inarticulate and vague if the anthropologist strives to make him verbalize their respective properties. ...*"[26] The situation cannot be otherwise, since a Thai would not have thought to formalize questions on these two

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[24]Tambiah, (1968), pp. 52-53.

[25]Ibid., p. 53.

[26]Ibid., (the italics are mine.) Compare this to Terwiel, (May 1976), p. 393; "However, during the first months of fieldwork, it became clear that questions regard to the division or the syncretism of Buddhist and non-Buddhist practices presented informants with severe problems. Though in general no reticence was met when discussing religious belief or practices, as soon as the question arose whether this was in accordance with the teachings contravened the doctrine, a variety of reactions was observed. *The more sophisticated person usually brought forward the view that the Lord Buddha had never forbidden ancient ritual to take place. Other hesitatingly made up their minds with regard to the orthodoxy of a ritual, but on subsequent occasions contradicted their own judgement. Many were at a loss to classify rituals or beliefs under heading such as "Buddhist" and "non-Buddhist. It soon appeared that informants were classifying merely to please the researcher; the categories under discussion had little relevance in their minds.* (The italicization is mine.)

concepts. For them they belong to different fields. Tambiah's account on the leaving of the "khwan" at death is rather presumptuous. People do not think about the "khwan" in connection with birth or death at all. The fact is rather obvious since it can exist in an animate object such as house, car etc. For animate objects, the concept of "khwan" is for this life and the concept of "winjan" is for the transmigration process. The latter very probably was introduced from India. Here again the people are not so concerned with the dichotomy or the analysis of the beliefs. The practices are accepted, we may say, as traditional, rather than as functional.

In any case the general term used is "maukhwan" rather than the word "paahm." That Tambiah tries to raise the question out of the "pseudo-situation" is rather obvious, for he emphasizes the word "paahm" rather than the common word "maukhwan." The situation here is not about the antagonism or the reciprocity between brahman and bhikṣu, but the relation between indigenous and Buddhist traditions.

Even in this latter case of relationship, indigenous and Buddhism which are not put into "antagonistic" situation by Tambiah, it is hard to systematically discern or show clearly which part is indigenous, which Buddhist. The evidence suggests something other than the tension between them. And Tambiah saw it too that there is no antagonistic aspect between "maukhwan" and "bhikkhu." They belong to the same society. "Maukhwan" above all are educated in Buddhist monastic system. How could one separate the two practices if this infusion has been going on for ages? Would we say that he intends to do so or because having grown up in this type of environment, he does what he sees fit and auspicious for the ceremony. How would then the question arising from the context of the antagonism between brahman and bhikṣu of India be translated, historically or socially, to the situation of Buddhism in Thailand? The situation is thus better explained by looking at the perception toward religion of these peoples, rather than trying to formulate the dichotomy or its structure.

In the case of Bechert, the tendency is toward dissecting Buddhism into different types.[27] But these categories such as "court" Buddhism, popular Buddhism, elite Buddhism etc., do not really represent the actual situation in Southeast Asia, and perhaps, for that matter, in India. No Buddhist in Thailand would say that their Buddhism is different from that practised by the king. And the king himself would not think that his Buddhism is different from his peoples'. What the king does to gain merit and to assure the prosperity of his kingdom expressed by means of Buddhism is not conceptually and materially different from what the people do. Of course, elite and popular concepts seem to give a good picture and good means to study Buddhism, and there are certainly elite monks and laymen in Buddhism. But this does not guarantee that they would not behave or express themselves religiously as other people. In fact, even in India Schopen has shown that what we thought as popular Buddhism was also practiced by the monks.[28] These kinds of categorizing should be used only as a tool to study Buddhism, and not as a conclusive categorization of Buddhism. This methodology is acceptable if it is used for descriptive purpose, but not as a conclusive character of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

With all these scholarly works the present situation of the studies on the practice of the Theravāda Buddhists is rather confusing and inconclusive in almost every aspect. The situation is best summarized and described by B.J. Terwiel, which will be quoted extensively.[29]

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[27]Bechert characterizes Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia as having six components: 1. a monastic Buddhism of the Theravāda type; 2. the Great tradition canonical or literary Buddhism; 3. popular Buddhism having foundation of localized Great tradition Buddhist elements supplemented by a cult of the gods and magical rites; 4. non-Buddhist cult of the gods, 5. court Buddhism or state religion composed of buddhaized version of regional vaiṣṇavite-brāhmanism or modern Theravāda Buddhism. See Day, (1989), pp. 80 ff.

[28]Schopen, (1988-1989).

[29]Terwiel, (May 1976), pp. 391-403.

> A survey of the literature on the practice of religion in Theravāda Buddhist countries reveals what may be a unique situation in the study of religions. Many authors state unequivocally that Theravada Buddhists adhere to more than one religious tradition. Apart from "otherworldly" Buddhism, these Southeast Asia peoples adhere to other strands of religion, generally classed under rubics such as "non-Buddhistic beliefs," "folk religion," "animism," or "supernaturalism." Yet, through virtually all authors recognize this situation, there is no consensus in their views on how the different subsystems are interrelated.
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> Some authors, while differentiating between Buddhist and non-Buddhist practices and beliefs, maintain that these different types of religion have in the course of centuries become so intermingled that at present it is impossible to draw a distinction between them. they cannot state where Buddhism ends and religion of different type begins. Such views are expressed unequivocally by some and implicitly by others; these authors appear to have decided that religion in Theravāda Buddhist countries is a blend of two traditions. Others maintain that the undistinguishable mixture is made up of three different types of creeds.
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> Some authors, however, consider that the distinction between Buddhism and non-Buddhism can be clearly drawn; these scholars tend to see Buddhism and non-Buddhism as complimentary subtypes of religion, with each subtype fulfilling a distinct function in society. From these perspective, Buddhism is concerned with future lives and otherworldly goals, whilst local religious beliefs deal with the magical side of everyday life. One author recognizes two religious orientation but, instead of giving them complementary status, deems them to be incompatible and opposed. yet other researches distinguish between Buddhism on the one hand and animism on the other, but do not appear to rely on functionalist explanations of this phenomenon (curious enough mainly local scholars). And then there are more complex analyses in which more than two sub-religions are distinguished.

Terwiel rounds out the situation by stating that "..Suffice it to note that there is a general agreement amongst them only with regard to the opinion that, next to Buddhist faith, there can be found in Theravāda Buddhist countries one or more layers of non-Buddhist religion."[30] As a consequence these scholarly works thus can be grouped into two trends: those which prefer to explain the situation by the concept of

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[30] Ibid., p. 392.

"syncretism", and those which maintain the separation among them, explaining it by ways of the interaction or the different functions between different layers of creeds.

The problem probably lies in the label "Theravāda Buddhism." The word "Theravāda" sometimes is used for that purpose to avoid the derogatory term "Hīnayāna." But this usage causes confusion. Since "Theravāda" represents only a school among other schools which had been grouped under the name of "Hīnayāna."[31]

The history of Theravāda Buddhism is mostly in connection with Sri Lanka and countries in Southeast Asia. This again leads us to another confusion. Since Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia, at least in the chronicles, shows itself in every aspect as being inspired and derived from Sri Lanka, therefore, it is common in a book on a history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia that any sign of Buddhism, if it is Theravāda, must have come from Sri Lanka. This, moreover, entails in the misconception that Theravāda Buddhism did not arrive in the area before we have the solid data to establish the close relations between Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. The conclusion is not always reliable, since we also have to take into account South India and Andhra areas as its source. Moreover, later on the relations between Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia in terms of religion was rather a mutual one.[32] Buddhism had several times been reintroduced to Sri Lanka from Southeast Asian countries.

The term thus gets confused with "Sinhalese Buddhism." And this "Sinhalese Buddhism" sometimes called "Orthodox Theravāda" is considered by some scholars in the narrowest sense: Theravāda Buddhism which had been purified and unified in favor of the Mahāvihāra sect by the King Parākramabāhu (1158-1186).[33] Coedès has rightly cautioned us on using the term "Sihalese Buddhism" to

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[31]Bareau, (1955).

[32]For relations between these two regions see Hazra, (1982); Paranavitana, (1932); Sirisena, (1978).

[33]Coedès, (1956), p. 226.

describe a school of Buddhism which used Pāli. But then again this caution gives rise to another confusion. Some scholars then would use "Theravāda" to signify only that which had been reformed by that king. This usage is rather too narrow since the word is found in the older texts before that event took place.[34]

Then what is it that we call "Theravāda Buddhism"? Should we call these countries Theravāda Buddhist at all? The problems of the tension, layers, substrata arising in the course of the studies of the practice show that we might have been misled by imposing the name "Theravāda Buddhist" to these countries. For in these studies, this practice, of course, is always of Theravāda Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia, and not just Buddhist or Southeast Asia religion itself. In fact the only reason we could call them Theravāda Buddhist, or more preferable just Buddhist, is that the Buddhist norms are the most respected and have supremacy over other norms, be they Brahmanic or other local beliefs. Since the answering of this question involves also the historical aspect, we shall have to deal with it after the investigation on historical issues.

Issues on the history of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

Evidence, epigraphical and archaeological, shows that Sri Lanka cannot be excluded from having been an early source of Buddhism. In the case ofTheravāda Buddhism it seems to be the only source, since we cannot really connect any data to other parts of the Indian subcontinent. We cannot be sure that Aśokan mission had ever been sent. Even if it was sent, for want of data, we cannot say that it represented Theravāda Buddhism.

Theravāda Buddhism had reached the area as early as other schools of Buddhism and Brahmanism. This fact should have been known for a long time, had the

[34]The term appears first in Majjhima Nikāya, I: 164, and also in Dīpavamsa IV, 6, 13.

scholars paid more attention to the data provided by the "quotation" inscriptions which we have dealt with in the fourth chapter. Instead we find in scholarly works, esteemed by other scholars as late as 1985 the following example:

> The archaeological remains of this pre-Pagan urbanized culture show that it is uniform to a significant degree. Mongmai, Hanlan, Binnaka, in the central dry zone, and Śri Kṣetra, Beitkthano, and Winka, south of it, were related in several ways. They apparently used the same Tibeto-Burman language (Pyu) and wrote in Devanagari, Kadamba, and Pallava script of Andhra.... Their belief system includes Sārvāstivādin Buddhism (an early branch of the Hīnayāna whose doctrines were similar to those of the later Theravāda and who wrote their texts in Sanskrit), elements of Hinduism, and a rather wide-spread Southeast Asian practice of urn burial.
>
> More important, some of their material and ideological culture show continuity with the Pagan period. Their ideology of salvation for example, was closely related to the doctrine of the future Buddha (Metteya) and the four Buddhas of this kappa (the present cosmic age)...[35]

The evidence that there was Theravāda Buddhism using Pāli canon has been established in the fourth chapter. We have here another problem of identifying Buddhism in the area as Sarvāstivādin without any substantial data. The application of the names of schools in Buddhism should be done with great caution, since the names originate from different reasons, some because of geographical reason, some because of doctrinal, some because of differences in the interpretation of the Vinaya rules.[36] Names such as Theravāda, Mahāsanghika, therefore, should not be treated on par with Sarvāstivāda and Sautrāntika. The first pair does not have any doctrinal value in the names as in the second pair. Considering from this standpoint, if one proposes that there was Sarvāstivāda Buddhism flourishing in such and such area, he has to come up with the evidence which shows the tenet of the Sarvāstivādins. Only

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[35]Michael Aung-Thwin, (1985), p. 17. Words in parentheses are his.

[36]Lamotte, (1958), pp. 571 ff.; Bareau, (1955), pp. 40-41.

a stanza of Sanskrit verse such as the ye dharma is not enough to confirm that the Sarvāstivādins were flourishing more than the other schools. The 'facile' criterion that any Buddhist Sanskrit text, which cannot be surely identified as Mahāyāna, is a Sarvāstivādin text should be dropped. Nevertheless, we do not deny the possibility of it being there.[37]

In another recent scholarship we find the description of the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia as follows:

> Pour résumer l'ensemble de ce parcours historique on pourrait fixer cinq etapes qui aboutissent, à la fin de notre XV ème siècle, à une unification à peu près complète du bouddhisme de l'Asie du Sud-Est péninsulaire sous l'égide du Mahavihara :
> 1/ une période- encore presque inconnue- où appariaissent ici et là, notamment en Birmanie et en Thaïlande, des traces d'un bouddhism directement issu de l'Inde mais encore mal identifié. Cette période correspond aux IIème - VIème siècle de notre ère.
> 2/ le fleurissement du bouddhisme de Dvāravati, du petit véhicule mais non-pāli, qui va féconder les cultures suivantes.
> 3/ Parallèlement se constituaient en Birmanie des royaumes Pyu, à la religion syncrétique, et un ensemble Môn influencé par ou héritier des communautés bouddhiques de l'estuaire de la Krsna, en Inde.
> 4/ L'apparition ensuite, au Xème - XIIème siècle de notre ère, en Birmanie, d'un bouddhisme en liaison avec Kancipuram mais également, via les coomunautés de l'actuel Bangladessh, avec les royaumes Pala du Bihar.
> 5/ les débuts, au XIIème siècle, de la lente montée du Mahāvihāra, qui aboutira, trois siècles plue tard, à son installation presques complète.[38]

This account shows that the author is still relying on ancient scholarship, and probably has not kept up with newly discovered evidence. The account is not only misleading in terms of the origin of Buddhism in Southeast Asia, but also shows confusion in the use of terms. In any case, the spread of the Mahāvihāravāsin type of Buddhism is not the work of the Mahāvihāra monks, but monks from Southeast Asia who went there. The term "Mahāvihāra" should be used with caution. Since the effort

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[37]Aung-Thwin seems to have used Blagden, (Jun 1912), to form his statement. But he neglects N. Ray's book on Theravāda Buddhism in Burma, (1946). The data in that book should override Blagden's thesis.

[38]Guillon, (1984), pp. 123-124.

to unify all the sects of Parākramabāhu, even if he favored the Mahāvihāra, was successful. Viewing from this point there is only one Buddhism in Sri Lanka after that event.[39]

To study the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia, one has to take into account both India and Sri Lanka, and most important of all the situation in Southeast Asia itself. Only with this method could we stablish how and why only Buddhism has survived as a "national religion" in mainland Southeast Asia. When we say Buddhism here again it has to be understood as a system of practices and beliefs impregnated with other Indian and Southeast Asian elements.

It is quite common, even in more recent scholarship, to say that Theravāda Buddhism especially that from Sri Lanka had not reached Southeast Asia until the tenth or eleventh century. The general idea was that Mahāyāna and Tantric Buddhism preceded Theravāda Buddhism. Saddhatissa wrote:

> Although Buddhism was soon well-established in Ceylon, there are very few historical references to Buddhist contact with mainland South-East Asia. In fact it was Mahāyāna form of Buddhism that first penetrated the mainland kingdoms direct from India. However, the first contact with Theravāda was made before 1000 A.C.[sic] The powerful Burmese dominion of Anuruddha had been converted to the Theravāda through the contact of Ceylon and, as a result, northern Thailand, which formed part of his kingdom, was similarly influenced.[40]

His description is rather misleading. First of all, from our data shown in chapter four, Theravāda or at least a school of Buddhism using Pāli, was flourishing in Pyu and Dvāravatī. In fact where we have the quotation from the Pāli Abhidharma, we can say that it was Theravāda Buddhism. The evidence also shows that it was there earlier than other forms of Buddhism. It might be true that influences from India

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[39]Dohanian, (1977), p. 8; *ER*, Sinhalese Buddhism; Theravāda Buddhism; *DPPN*, II: 147-150; Bechert, (Aug 1970).

[40]Saddhātissa, (1974), p. 211.

through land routes might have affected Burma, but this was only the North of Burma. And the influence did not prove to be an earlier one.[41]

This type of misunderstanding originates from the incompleteness of the data in the early stage of Southeast Asian studies. In Burma, Blagden, after reviewing the languages used in inscriptions, found that most of the loan words are in Sanskrit form rather than Pāli. He then draws a conclusion that Mahāyāna had come to the area before the Theravāda.[42] However, this line of reasoning is inappropriate. Sanskrit is not the sole property of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Any scholarly texts from India would be in Sanskrit. It is evident that there were Brahmins in the court of Burmese kings.[43] These Brahmans were well-versed in Sanskrit. They advised the king in various kinds of state affairs. They might have written these inscriptions, and thus chose the forms familiar to their ear, the Sanskrit form. In making this conclusion, Blagden also undermines the existence of Pāli and hybrid-formed words, appearing also in the same inscriptions. The authors of these inscriptions apparently were well-versed in both languages. It is the matter of prosody, that is to say what sounds pleasant to their ear, that the Sanskrit forms were preferred. The data cannot be used as evidence to determine the evolution of religions in Southeast Asia.

Another source of this misunderstanding comes from the heavily studied area such as Cambodia. The data found there are overwhelmingly Sanskritic. However, the same restraint should be applied here for the use of Sanskrit does not indicate that there were no other kinds of Buddhism. Mahāyāna Buddhism, for sure, did not monopolize the use of this language. It certainly cannot be used to support the theory that Mahāyāna had arrived in the area before Theravāda. And the data cannot be

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41 N. Ray, (1936).

42 Blagden, (June 1912).

43 See introduction of *EB*, I, part 2; D. E. Smith, (1965), p. 23.

applied. In the case of Dvāravatī tradition which the Pāli tradition was predominant. This tradition did not show strong influence of Mahāyāna.

Other misleading statements in Saddhātissa's article quoted above are those concerning the famous Pagan king, Aniruddha. First, Aniruddha was not "converted" to Theravāda through Ceylon, but through the cultures of Lower Burma, either the Pyu or Mon. This latter issue will be examined later. Second, he did not have sovereignty over the northern part of Thailand. The kingdom of Lanna received the Sinhalese Theravāda from the kingdom of Sukhothai.[44]

Theravāda Buddhism has been strong in Southeast Asia particularly in the "western zone" since the third or fourth century if not earlier. Evidence shows its continuity down to the present. But to say that there was only Theravāda Buddhism in its "pure" form is wrong. Or to say that this Theravāda came only from South India or Sri Lanka is equally incorrect, since both epigraphical and archaeological data are mixed. Except for some exceptions such as in the case in which we have "quotation inscriptions" from the Pāli Abhidharma, only then can we pinpoint that it was the Theravādin tradition. But again considering from the attitude toward religion of these peoples, the polylithic nature is unavoidable. They probably recognized all these "different" creeds as a whole. And it is not impossible that some might have regarded or preferred one creed as superior to others. The central government, if they had one, never forced their people to accept or adopt only one creed. As a matter of fact there is no need to have only one religion. In the case of good things, the Southeast Asians are probably thinking that the more, the better. If Christianity had not been so insistant on one God and one faith, it too would have been taken in and formed the whole picture of Southeast Asian religious life.

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[44]Department of Fine Arts, (1987), p. 15.

History of Theravāda Buddhism from the eleventh century.

Viewing from the examples given above it is not surprising to find the received version of Theravāda Buddhism as a movement starting from the eleventh century A.D.[45] The date given here is the accepted date for all the studies on religions in Southeast Asia. It has been presumed that Theravāda Buddhism from Sri Lanka had made itself felt in Burma and Thailand only from this time onward. The event has been considered to be of a great impact, since it coincided with the emergence of the classical states of Southeast Asia which remain basically the same as the present political setting.[46] The history of Theravāda Buddhism therefore has close connections with the "founding" of the Burmese and the Thai states.

Most of the studies give an impression that the peoples of Southeast Asia had been introduced to the new faith.[47] Some questions could be asked such as: Had these people known Buddhism before? In what form? How did this early contact influence the situation later? Neither have the issues such as the reminiscence of Mahāyāna Buddhism received through China and Northern India been discussed. Most of the time it is assumed that Mahāyāna and Tantric Buddhism preceded Theravāda Buddhism.

Received version of the ascendency of Theravāda Buddhism

We are now in the position to concentrate our attention on the history of two races of people, the Burmese and the Tai. From the tenth century onward, the political situation in Southeast Asia began to take the shape as what we now have. Countries

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[45]See the article "Theravāda Buddhism" in *ER*.

[46]Coedès, (1968), p. 150 and chapters 12, 13, 14.

[47]Ibid., "The political result of the conquest of Thaton was the submission of the whole delta and its Indian principalities, thus open a window on the sea for the Burmese; the cultural result was the conversion of Pagan to Theravāda Buddhism and the decline of Tantric Buddhism.." Actually, the sovereignty of Burmese over the Mon and other groups in Burma was constantly waxing and waning. The Mon became independent for several times.

formed in this period up to the colonization is usually called the "classical states of Southeast Asia." We have seen earlier that before this time the areas in central and lower Burma were the centers of Pyu tradition, and later on of the Mon people. Most of what is now Thailand was occupied by the Dvāravatī cultures, presumably belonging to the Mon people.

The Burmese and the Tai people were thought to have come from the north. In the case of Burma, the coming of the Burmese filled in the gap after the Pyu centers were destroyed by the army of Nan-Chao. They settled at the Pyu village, Pagan, from whence they started expanding toward the south. They finally conquered the Mon, absorbing all the artisans and culture, and above all according to modern historians, Theravāda Buddhism.

In the case of the Thai people the migration toward the south is still a debated issue among scholars. Coedès thinks that the penetration of Thai people to the south was an old and gradual process, not a sudden influx due to the Mongol conquest of Yunnan.[48] Luce, however, thinks otherwise.[49] There is also another theory that Thai people had never migrated from the north, but originally belong to Southeast Asia.[50] We are not in a position to make any judgement on the issue here. Since the traces of the migration are long lost, the information on the issue is mostly speculation. In local chronicles, there are stories of the chiefs of Thai people in the north sending out their sons to build their own cities. Most of the time the location of these cities is toward the south. Yet in some chronicles, kingdoms as far south as Nakorn Si Thammarat are said to be Thai.[51] The situation seems to be that the northern part of Thailand in

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[48]Coedès, (1968), p. 189.

[49]Luce, (1958), p. 126.

[50]Manit Vallibhotama, (B.E. 2521 = A.D. 1978).

[51]Ibid., pp. 62-201.

those days was less populated, and it was thus easy for the Thai to penetrate and build new kingdoms. On the other hand there were also penetrations of Mon and Khmer folks from the south. Mon people at least according to the Cāmadevīvamsa, Jinakālamālinī established their kingdom in Haribhuñjaya and other cities around the area in the seventh century.[52] They brought with them art styles, scripts together with Buddhism. Even if one might object that Khmer had never dominated the north of Thailand politically, traces of Khmer culture are found as far north as Sukhothai. Historically speaking, the situation in the north of Thailand then was favorable to developments and changes. The penetration of the Thai people into this area, gradual or abrupt, was bound to produce some effects. At least as early as the eleventh century, they had already been recognized as a "race" in inscriptions of kingdom as far as of the Cham.[53]

On the religious history, Aniruddha (Anuruddha, Anowrahta), was supposed to be the first Burmese king who embraced Theravāda Buddhism. N. Ray described the event as follows:

> The scene of history now shifted from the peninsular country to the upper regions of the Irrawady, and centres round Pagan, the seat of Anawrahta dynasty. .... Ridden with primitive heathenism and a very based sort of what has been identified as Mahāyānist Tantrikism, imported from Tibet, Bengal and Assam, Pagan found in the Theravāda, the new religion introduced from the land of Talaings (i.e. the Mons of south Burma), a purer and a simpler faith, a religion with more direct appeal and a fresh message of deliverance. With Shin Arahan at the head of the Sangha and the support of the Throne and the state at its back, the new faith soon secured the solid ground and spread far from all sides. Even during the reign of Anawrahta the fame of Pagan as a centre of the Theravāda faith was so well established that she exchanged religious gifts with Ceylon, and, what is more, established direct religious relations with the island where Pāli Buddhism had built

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[52] This is as claimed by the chronicles. The archaeological data, however, do not appear until the tenth century. See Department of Fine Arts, (B.E. 2531 = A.D. 1988), pp. 35 ff.

[53] Luce, (1958), pp. 124-125.

up its new home after a long period of cruel Cola persecution and its banishment from South India.[54]

But let us go back to the source from which every scholarly has drawn from, the *Sāsanavamsa*. Most of the scholars take only the concluding portion of the story, and neglect the discrepancy cited earlier in the book. The *Sāsanavamsa* gives at least three versions of Aniruddha's "conversion." And curiously enough non of them mentions the term "Theravāda", nor links "new" Buddhism embraced by the king to Sri Lanka.

Since these versions are crucial to our study, we shall quote it extensively.

> In the town of Arimaddana in the Tambadīpa country in our Maramma circle, there reigned a ruler, king Sammuti by name. From that time until King Anuruddha, the Samaṇakuttakas, thirty thousand in number. They lived in a country called Samati, walking about instructing their followers, sixty thousand in number. The doctrine of these Samaṇakuttakas was as follows:
>
> "If one commits killing, he can be freed form this sin by just reciting such and such *paritta*. Even it one commits patricide and matricide, he also can be freed from these immediate-yielding-resulted karma (ānatariyakamma) by just muttering such and such *paritta*. If one desires to arrange a marriages for one's son or daughter, he must first hand over the (one of them) to the ācarya before giving them to be married. Whoever fails to do so will entails great demerit."[55]

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[54]N. Ray, (1946), p. 254.

[55]Sāsanavaṃsa, p. 56.
Amhākaṃ hi Marammamaṇḍale Tambadīparaṭṭhe Arimaddananagare Sammutirājā nāma bhūpālo rajjaṃ kāresi. Tato paṭṭhāya yāva Anuruddharaññā Samati-nāmake dese nissinnānaṃ tiṃsasahassamattānaṃ samṇakuttakānaṃ saṭṭhisahassamattānaṃ sissānaṃ ovādam datvā cariṃsu.
Tesaṃ pana samaṇakuttakānaṃ ayaṃ vādo:
Sace yo pāṇātipātaṃ kareyya so īdisaṃ parittaṃ bhaṇanto tamhā pāpakammā parimuñceyya. Sace pana yo mātāpitaraṃ hantvā anantariyakammato parimuccitukāmo bhaveyya īdisaṃ parittaṃ bhaṇeyya. Sace pi puttadhītīnaṃ āvāhavivāhakammaṃ kattukāmo bhaveyya ācariyānaṃ paṭhama niyyādetvā āvāhavivāhakammaṃ kātabbaṃ. Yo isdaṃ cārittaṃ atikkameyya bahu apuññaṃ pasaveyyā ti.

The name "samaṇakuttaka" is explained in the introductory essay of the Sāsanavamsa by Bode (p. 17), as follows: "With regard to the name Samaṇakuttaka: from analogy with *Kuttima* = artificial (derived by Childers from Skt. *Kṛtṛma*), kuttaka seems to be the Skt. *Kṛtaka* = false, artificial, simulated. *Samaṇakuttaka* would therefore simply mean: simulating (the life of) the Samaṇas." These samaṇakuttakas have been identified with the ari of Burma, see Duroiselle, (1915-16).

After giving the tenet of these Samaṇakuttakas, the author continues his narration with the account concerning the Arahant (Shin Rahan) who "converted" King Aniruddha. He gives three versions of the story: from the Rājavaṃsa, the Parittanidāna and from the Sāsanapaveṇī. All of them begin with the Arahant's birth story.

The first gives the following story:

The elders of the Sangha in Burmese region thought that the śāsana in Burma had not been on a whole firmly established. They went up to ask Indra for help. Indra thus sent one of the Devaputta to be reborn in a Brahmani's womb. A boy was born and was protected by the Elder Sīlabuddhi. When he became of age he entered monkhood. He learned and became well-versed in all the Tripiṭakas. In Burmese circles he was known as "Arahanta." (We do not even have his name!) He then proceeded to the Arimaddana city (Pagan). Indra induced a hunter to meet with him while he was sitting in the forest near the town. The hunter thought "if this person is a non-human being, he must be a Yakkha; if he is human he must be a Milakkha." He then brought Arahanta to the king. The scene of the Elder's meeting with Aniruddha is modelled exactly after the meeting of Nigrodha and Emperor Aśoka. The king asked the Elder to sit as be fitting himself. The Elder ascended the Throne and sat down. After asking him questions about his birth and his family, the Appamāda-vagga was preached to the king. The king was pleased and built him a monastery. The Samaṇakuttakas without any supporter became poor. They were ordered to wear white garments and serve as armed soldiers in the king's service.[56]

The Parittanidāna however gives a totally different story:

Here "Arahanta" seemed to be a native of Vijjavāsī in Sri Lanka. The Elder went first to Upadvārāvatī and then to Sudhamma to study the scripture. He heard

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[56] Sāsanavamsa, p. 57-58.

that there was a scripture hidden in the Patali tree in Sirikhetta (Śri Kṣetra). Having gone to that city for this purpose, he met with a hunter whose thought was the same as in the previous account. The hunter brought the Elder to the king. The conversation between the Elder and the king is rather interesting:

> Then the king asked the Elder: "Who are you?" The Elder replied: "I am, Great king, the disciple of Gotama." The king asked further: "What are the Three Jewels?" The Elder said: "Great king, the Buddha should be considered as Mahosadhapandita, the Dharma as Ummagga (turnel, Mahosadhajātaka other name is Ummaggajātaka), the Sangha as the army of Videha." Since the answers are given metaphorically, the king did not understand them, asking; "Are these the disciples of Gotama?" The Elder answered: "Great king, they are not, on the contrary, they are the Samaṇakuttakas, different from us." When the had been said, the king abandoned the Samaṇakuttakas from that time onward. They were not considered worthy even as grass. The king also destroyed on that spot the book obtained from the trunk of the Patali tree...[57]

The king, pleased with the Elder, brought him to Pagan from Śri Kṣetra. However, there is another account concerning the book hidden in the tree trunk. The account was probably a well-known one, since, even if it is contradictory to the other one, the author did not see fit to leave it out.

The book in question is said to have been compiled by a Samaṇakuttaka in order to please the king that they too had the right doctrine. The book was then interred in the Patali trunk in Śri Kṣetra. The Samaṇakuttakas then raised a rumor that they had dreamt about this book, having heard the new the king had gone to Śri

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[57]Ibid., p. 59.

..Tadā rājā theraṃ pucchi: Ko pana tavan ti.
Aham mahārāja Gotamassa sāvako ti
Puna rāja pucchi: Tiṇṇaṃ pana ratanānaṃ kīdiso ti
Thero āha: mahosadhapaṇḍito viya mahārāja buddho daṭṭhabbo; ummaggo viya dhammo; Videhasenā viya saṃgho ti. Evaṃ upamehi pakāsito rājā puna pucchi: kin nu kho ime Gotamassa sāvakā ti.
Na kho mahārāja ime Gotamassa sāvakā, ime pana amhehi visabhāgā samaṇakuttakā yevā ti evaṃ vutte tato paṭṭhāya te samaṇakuttake vijahi. Tiṇaṃ nātimaññi pātalirukkhasusirato pi laddhaṃ tesaṃ gandhaṃ laddhaṭṭhāne yeva agginā jhapesi.

Kṣetra and found the book. The doctrine appeared to be exactly as the Good Dharma. He thus bestowed great gifts on the Samaṇakuttakas. But after he met with the Elder "Arahanta" he had it destroyed.[58]

The third account on Arhanta's life is from the Sāsanapaveṇī. It consists of merely a lineage of the teachers in S..dhamma from Anomadassī down to Arahanta and his chief disciple and Ariyavamsa. There is no account of the meeting between Aniruddha and the Elder.[59]

The author then gives his final opinion as follows:

> Thus although there appear various views of various teachers, yet the fact that the Elder Arahanta came to Arimaddana (pagan) and established the religion there alone is sufficient here. It should not be overlooked.
>
> For even in the opinion of all the teachers, the meaning truly intended is this: When the Elder Arahanta had come to the town of Arimaddana, he found the religion. But it should be understood that the Elder Arahanta was well-known by his original name, Dhammadassī, and that a resident of the city of Sudhamma, he was a disciple of the Elder Sīlabuddhi.
>
> And that even before being ordained, he was trained in the four Vedas. Having taken his ordination, studied all the Pitakas with their commentaries, and gone to the other shore (attained Arhatship.), he became famous everywhere. People brought him to Sokkataya and honored him. He stayed there for ten years and then went back to Sudhamma adopting the life of a forest monk.
>
> After that in the year one thousand five hundred and sixty-one of the Conqueror of the Wheel (the Buddha)...King Aniruddha ascended the throne. At that time in Arimaddana, the Samaṇakuttakas declared themselves: "We are the disciples of Gotama." ... And when the king heard about the Brahmacaryā suitable for household life, he took faith in them. *As the same thing was also handed down by the tradition that he did not discard it. But after he met the Elder Arahant, he stopped the regular practices of the Samaṇakuttakas, and took faith in the Sāsana.*[60]

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[58]Ibid., pp. 59-60.

[59]Ibid., p. 60.

[60]Ibid., p. 60.

There are numerous highly interesting points in these three accounts, including the conclusion of the author of the *Sāsanavamsa*. In the first account the story seems to show the enmity between the Samaṇakuttakas and the new school brought from the South.

It is in the second story that we have numerous interesting points. First, there was reference to different places beginning with Sri Lanka, Upadvārāvatī [sic], and Sudhamma. Sudhamma has always been identified as somewhere near Thaton in the South of Burma. But "Upadvāravatī" has never been identified. Later in the account of the establishment of the śāsana in Jeyyavaddhana (Taung-u), the name of a town is mentioned as "Dvāravatī." This is identified by scholars as Dvāravatī in Central Thailand. Upadvārāvati here might be a town "near" Dvāravatī, since Buddhism was evidently flourishing in that tradition.[61] Second, the account is not so hostile to the Samaṇakuttakas except for the burning of the book. This again has an alternative account. The book was also said to be perfectly in accordance with 'our' doctrine (the Saka-vāda). The confinement of texts in the trees seems to be a reminiscence of the tradition practiced in Śri Kṣetra, since we find numerous "Quotation inscriptions" from the area. They are in Pāli and quoted from the Pali canon. Third, Ummagga Jātaka is

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Evaṃ nānācariyānaṃ vādo nānākārena dissamāno pi Arahantatherassa
Arimaddananagare sāsanaṃ anuggahetvā paṭiṭṭhānatā yev' ettha pamānaṃ ti katvā
nāvamaññitabbo.
Sabbesaṃ hi ācariyānaṃ vāde pi Arahantathero Arimadddananagaraṃ āgantvā
sāsanaṃ patiṭṭhāpesī ti attho icchitabbo yevā ti, Arahantthero pana mūlanāmena
Dhammasdassī ti pakaṭo Sudhammapuravāsī Sīlabuddhitherassa sisso ti daṭṭhabbo.
So ca thero pubbeva pabbajjakālato catūsu vedesu sikkhitasippo.
Pabbajitvā pana sāṭṭhakathaṃ piṭakattayaṃ uggaṇhitvā pāraṃ gantvā sabbattha
pākaṭo. Sokkatayanagaraṃ ānetvā manussā pūjenti.
Tattha dasa vassāni vasitvā puna Sudhammapuraṃ āgantvā araññavāsaṃ samādayi.
Tato pacchā jinacakke ekasaṭṭhīdhike pañcasate sahasse ca sampatte...
Anuruddharājā rajjaṃ papuṇi.
Tadā Arimaddananagare samaṇakuttakā mayaṃ Gotamasāvakā ti vatvā...
Anuruddharājā ca tesaṃ samaṇakuttakānaṃ āgāriyābrahmacariyādīni satvāna pasādi.
Evam pi paveṇiyā āgatattā na pajahi.
Arahantam pana theraṃ passitvā tato paṭṭhāya tesaṃ samaṇakuttakānaṃ
nibaddhavattāni bhinditvā sāsane pasīdi.

[61]Ibid., p. 80.

still highly regarded by the Burmese. In Thailand the honor is accorded to the Vessantara Jātaka. The last account seems to be a lineage, and thus does not give any account on the conversion. The names might as well be the lineage of another person.

In all these accounts, not even once the term "Theravāda" is used. The word "Sakavādī" is used instead. Only the second account gives some reference to Sri Lanka. This seems to show that the authors of these works do not connect their śāsana strictly to Sri Lanka, but rather to the lineage of Sona-Uttara, the Aśokan mission.[62]

All the accounts try to connect the Elder Arahanta to Sudhamma, either he was a native of the town or had been staying there for some time. His biography is rather obscured. We do not even know his name. The name "Arahanta" is rather an epithet given because he had presumably attained Arhatship. We do not know from which source the name "Dhammadassī" given by the author of the Sāsanavamsa came. From all the evidence he is rather a mythical person, rather than historical. This also is applicable to the account of the "conversion of King Aniruddha." It is clear that in the first account the story is the well-known story of the "conversion of Aśoka."[63]

As for the Samaṇakuttakas, scholars have long identified them with some certainty with Tantric Buddhism. Even if the accounts written later have tried to make us believe that they were persecuted by Aniruddha, the evidence turns out to be otherwise.[64] At least in the Sāsanavamsa, the author finally concludes that they were

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[62]When the new line of ordination was introduce from Sri Lanka, the old line still existed and formed the Sangha as a whole. See N. Ray, (1946), pp. 110 ff. The same situation happened in Sukhothai where the new Sri Lankan line formed the Araññika (the forest monks) as a separate group but still belonging to the same Sangha. See H.R.H. Prince Damrong Rāchānuphāp, (1923), pp. 5-41. For the forest monks in Sri Lanka see Rahula, (1956), chapter X, and pp. 196 ff., 215 ff.

[63]For reference to different versions of the legend of Aśoka see Strong, (1983), pp. 18 ff.

[64]Duroiselle, (1915-16), pp. 83 ff., in which he produces new data on this group. The account is different from what the chronicles of Burma relate. He writes "Another point worthy of remark is that contrary to all we are told in the chronicles about the intense enmity between the Arī and the professors

not disregarded by the King. This is also evident in the archaeological find reported by Duroiselle.[65]

In connection with this "conversion", there is another account on the obtaining of the Tripiṭaka from the Mon country. The king, persuaded by the Elder "Arahanta", sent gifts and asked King Manuha, the king of Mon at the time, for the Tripiṭaka. But a refusal came, and he thus attacked that kingdom. Seizing all the books and artisans, he brought them back to Pagan.[66]

The story seems to be in conflict with the account given earlier in the *Sāsanavamsa* itself. The status of Buddhism in the Mon territory is reported in the following manner:

> Thereafter in the year one thousand and six hundred, the Rāmañña country, the place where the religion had come into existence for the three reasons already mentioned, was disturbed by three kinds of fear, namely, fear from village-plundering thieves, fear from a kind of burning fever, and fear from the adversaries of the religion. And at that time the religion became very weak there..
> Even the monks there could not comply with (the Buddha's) teaching.
> In the time of the King Manohari (Manuha)..., the religion became very weak.
> In the year one hundred (thousand) and sixty-one of the Conqueror of the Wheel (the Buddha).. the king named Aniruddha of the city of Arimaddana brought the Sangha from there together with the Piṭakas....[67]

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of the newly implanted Theravāda faith from Thaton, the two communities seem to have lived on a footing of amity; for, as the inscription tell us, Shin Arahan, the staunch Theravādin, goes to Tenasserim in Lower Burma to bring back a Buddha-relic for enshrinement in the Nandamañña, an avowedly Ari temple. The fact no doubt is that, at Pagan as well as in India and elsewhere, Mahāyānism and Hināyānism, at that period probably long after, lived peaceably side by side, as I-Tsing and Tāranātha tell us was the case."

[65]See the previous footnote.

[66]Sāsanavamsa, pp. 62 ff.

[67]Ibid., p. 39.

> Tato pacchā chasatādhike sahasse sampatte pubbe vuttehi tīhi kāraṇehi sāsanassa uppattiṭṭhanabhūtaṃ Rāmaññaraṭṭhaṃ dāmarikacorabhayena pajjararogabhayena sāsanapaccatthikabhayena cā ti tīhi bhayehi ākulitaṃ ahosi
> Tadā ca tattha sāsanaṃ dubbalaṃ ahosi yathā udake mande tatra uppalaṃ dubbalan ti.
> Tattha bhikkhū pi sāsanaṃ yathā kāmaṃ pūretum na sakkā. Sūriyakumārassa nāma Manohārirañño pana kāle sāsanaṃ ativiya dubbalaṃ ahosi. Jinacakke ekasaṭṭhādhike

It is not quite understandable why the King would seek to obtain Buddhism from a place reported as "The religion became very weak." And the Pyu kingdom of Śri Kṣetra seems to have had the Piṭakas, at least enough for the Samaṇakuttakas, if we were to believe the story, to compile a book according to the Sakavāda. We have evidence that Aniruddha had searched for the texts and images from the Pyu areas, and brought back a fair number of them. He left his inscriptions behind in those stūpas from which the objects had been taken.

In all we may conclude that Aniruddha in expanding his territory toward the south, realized that the people in that area embraced Buddhism, presumably, that of the Pāli tradition. He thus tried to accommodate the faith and utilize it for the administrative purposes. The chronicles try to connect this to the Mon area, since it was believed that the area was the place where the Aśokan mission had landed. The reason seems to be that they try to establish or connect the lineage of the Sangha in Burma to that of Soṇa-Uttara. If we look at the epigraphical and archaeological data, the place where Buddhism flourished seemed to be Śri Kṣetra, rather than the Mon area. The reason for attacking the Mon was a political, and not religious one.

Now let us examine the case of Thailand. The situation seems to be parallel to that of Burma. The "conversion" is connected to a great king of Thailand, King Ramkhamhaeng. The Thai case is even more obscure than that of the Burmese. The evidence which has been used to substantiate that the Thai had become Theravāda country is an inscription of this king. We shall have to quote from all the passages that contain religious elements:

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vassasate sampatte ... Arimaddananagare Anuruddho nāma rājā tato saha piṭakena bhikkhusaṃghaṃ ānesi.

The people of this city Sukhodai like to observe the precepts and bestow alms. King Rāma Gamheṅ, the ruler of this city of Sukhodai, as well as the princes and princesses, the young men and women of rank, and all the noblefolk with out exception, both male and female, all have faith in the religion of the Buddha, and all observe the precept during the rainy season. At the close of the rainy season they celebrate the Kathina ceremonies, which last a month, with heaps of cowries, with heaps of areca nuts, with heaps of flowers, with cushions and pillows: the gifts they present [to the monks] as accessories to the Kathina [amount to] two million each year. Everyone goes to the Araññika over there for the recitation of the kathina. When they are ready to return to the city they walk together, forming a line all the way from the Araññika to the parade- ground.... As this city has four very big gates, and as people always crowd together to come in and watch the King lighting candles and setting off fireworks, this city is filled to the bursting point.

Inside this city of Sukhodai, there are vihāras, there are golden statues of the Buddha, there are statues eighteen cubits in height; there are big statues of Buddha and medium-sized ones; there are monks, Nissayamuttas, Theras and Mahātheras.

West of this city Sukhodai is the Araññika, built by King Rāma Gamheṅ as s gift to the Mahāthera Sangharāja, the sage who studied the scriptures from the beginning to the end, who is wiser than any other monk in the kingdom, and who has come from Möan Srī Dharmmarāja. Inside the Araññika there is a large rectangular vihāra, tall and exceedingly beautiful, and an eighteen-cubit statue of the Buddha standing up.

East of this city Sukhodai there are vihāras and monks....

North of this city Sukhodai there is the bazaar, there is the Acan statue (of the Buddha) (Acala, Acanā?)...

South of this city Sukhodai there are kuṭīa with vihāras and resident monks, there is the dam.....there is Brah Khabun. The divine sprite of that mountain is more powerful than any other sprite in this kingdom. Whatever lord may rule this kingdom of Sukhodai, if he makes obeisance to him properly, with the right offerings, this kingdom will endure, this kingdom will thrive; but if obeisance is not made properly or the offerings are not right, the sprite of the hill will no longer protect it and the kingdom will be lost.

In 1214 saka..., King Rām Gamheṅ, lord of this kingdom of Sri Sajjanālai and Sukhodai, who had planted these sugar-palm trees fourteen years before, commanded his craftsmen to carve a slab stone and place it in the midst of these sugar-palm tree. On the day of the new moon, the eighth day of the waxing moon, the day of full moon, and the eighth day of the waning moon, [one of] the monks, theras or mahāthera goes up

> and sits on the stone slab to preach the Dharma to the throng of lay-people who observe the precepts. When it is not a day for preaching the Dharma, King Rāma Gamheṅ.. goes up and sits on the stone slab, and lets the officials, lords and princes discuss affairs of the state with him. On the day of new moon and the day of full moon, when the white elephant named Rūcasrī has been decked out with howdah and tasseled head cloth, and always with gold on both tusks, King Rāma Gamheṅ mounts him rides away to the Araññika to pay homage to the Saṅgharāja, and then returns...
>
> In 1207 saka...he caused the holy relics to be dug up so that everyone could see them. They were worshiped for a month and six days, then they were buried in the middle of Sri Sajjanālai, and a cetiya was built on top of them which was finished in six years. A wall of rock enclosing the Brah Dhātu was built which was finished in three years.[68]

The description has been interpreted as the King embraced a "new" faith, the Theravāda Buddhism.[69] However, when the content of this inscription has been looked at closely, it proves to be otherwise. First of all the assertion that this is the description of Theravāda Buddhism is only deduced. The word does not appear anywhere in the inscription. Actually it scarcely appears at all in religious works of Southeast Asian countries. Nevertheless, much of the information here indicates that Buddhism at that time was not much different from Buddhism at present. The mentioning of the word "Araññika" seems to indicate that there was a relation between the tradition in Sukhothai and Sri Lanka.[70]

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[68]*EHS*, IX, pp. 209-217.

[69]Keyes, (1986), p. 33; Syamananda, (1977), p. 25; Paranavitana, (1932), p. 192.

[70]The terms refer to these two components of the Sangha are araññavasī or vanavasī as against grāmavāsī. The araññavasins usually take up the study of meditation (vipassanādhura), the grāmavāsins, the study of scripture (grandhadhura). It seems that all schools in Sri Lanka had the araññikavāsin group in their school, but it was not considered as a separate nikāyas. The tradition seems to have established from about the sixth century. The araññika monks are referred in the canonical works, and thus do not particular to Sri Lanka. However, the distinction made between the forest dwellers and the city dwellers seems to be more important in the sinhalese organization of the Sangha. The fact that the word in this inscription is in Pali form may be interpreted as influence from Pali tradition of Sri Lanka. See Rahula, (1956), pp. 196-197.

Yet we cannot accept that King Ramkhamhaeng was converted to Theravāda Buddhism. All the evidence shows that Buddhism had already established long before this inscription was written down. The Sangha had already been well-established. The king had appointed the Sangharāja as the head of the Sangha. The relations between political power and spiritual power was thus firmly established. The cult of stūpa and relics seem to have been long practiced. These are not the signs of newly adopted faith, but an established one.

At around this time the strong influx of Buddhism from Sri Lanka was still not evident. It happened later in the reign of this king's grandson half a century later.[71] The same statement can also be said of the situation in Burma. King Aniruddha did not embrace the Sihalese Theravāda Buddhism. Yet this does not mean that Theravāda Buddhism in Pyu and Mon areas did not have any contact with or influence from Sri Lanka.

Granted that Buddhism in King Ramkhamhaeng's reign came from Sri Lanka, some scholars raise question as to which among the three schools of Sri Lanka was the source of this Buddhism. In Thailand, Prathip Chumphon tries to demonstrate that Buddhism in Sukhothai had its origin from Nakhon Si Thammarat. And it was not the Pāli tradition of the Mahāvihāra, but the Abhayagirivihāra. His argument stems from the fact that there was not any Pāli inscription found in that town. All the inscriptions found are in Sanskrit.[72]

This seems to be perfectly reasonable as a conclusion. But he forgets that in Sri Lanka itself there was hardly any inscription in Pāli. Most of them are either in Sanskrit or in Sinhalese.[73] That there is no Pāli inscription in Nakhon Si Thammarat

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[71]*ER*, II: 392.

[72]Vidyalaykhru Nakhon Si Thammarat, (B.E. 2521 = A.D.1978), pp. 355-375.

[73]Paranavitana, (Feb 1928, Dec 1928-Feb 1933).

cannot be used to support his view either. Inscriptions in Sanskrit found there do not show any evidence that they belong to Abhayagirivihāra. Above all there was a close relationship between this town and Sri Lanka. We have found the copy of one and the same inscriptions in Sanskrit from both places.[74] At around that time, i.e. in the thirteenth century, King Parakkamabāhu had already united all the three schools in Sri Lanka. If Buddhism in Sukhothai was inspired by Buddhism in Nakhon Si Thammarat which had adopted it from Sri Lanka, it could only be in the form united by King Parakkamabāhu. The question of the difference between the Mahāvihāra and Abhayagiri cannot be raised here. Moreover, from the inscription of the King we cannot say that Nakhon Si Thammarat was the only source for Buddhism. It certainly did not start off with the bringing of the Sangharāja from Nakhon Si Thammarat.

Bizot on the other hand tries to propose that Buddhism from Sri Lanka which was adopted by the Burmese in the 12th century and the Thai in 15th century was not the Mahāvihāra school.[75] He begins his thesis by questioning why Buddhism as practiced in Southeast Asia is so different from that in the canon. What he has in mind as canonical Buddhism is the Mahāvihāra school of Sihalese Theravāda Buddhism. He then argues:

> The hypothesis is that the Mahāvihāra, introduced from the beginning of the second millennium, had been contaminated by the Brahmanism and the Mahāyāna introduced in the first millennium. But this hypothesis does not seem to be acceptable. The Mahāvihāra school was not firmly implanted in Southeast Asia until it was firmly established, that is to say, at a very later time, the 19th century. The Sihalapakkha (Sri Lankan side) represented and transmitted their (the Mahāvihāra) ideas from 12th century in Burma and from 15th in Thailand, but they were not affiliated to the Mahāvihāra as we generally thought.[76]

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[74]Vidyalaykhru Nakhon Si Thammarat, (B.E. 2521 = A.D.1978), pp. 439-473.

[75]*PSFT*, pp. 387-402.

[76]Ibid., p. 388.

He then proceeds to identify the Mahāvihāra and the non-Mahāvihāra traditions in Southeast Asia. To demonstrate their difference he uses 1. the formula for the ordination ceremony; 2. The enunciation of the Three refuges; 3. The arrangement of the robe; 4. The items of the robe and 5. The structure of the robe.[77]

The problem here is that these formula and the custom concerning the robe have been transmitted back and forth between Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. At least now, the "Mahāvihāravāsin" use the formula Bizot describes as being composed by the non-Mahāvihāravāsins. The arrangement of the robe designated to be that of Mahāvihāra by Bizot is actually that of the Mon tradition. This practice then was taken by Rāmā IV when he established the Dhammayuttikanikāya. Bizot seems to confound the Mahāvihāra with the Dharmayuttika.[78] His Mahāvihāravāsin formula for the ordination was composed by the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand who happened to be ordained in the Dharmayuttika order. And it was this order of Sangha that helped establish the Sangha of Sri Lanka in the nineteenth century.[79] Above all, the division of these three schools in Sri Lanka had already disappeared by the time that the Sihalapakkha, according to Bizot, reached Southeast Asia. It is hard to understand the meaning of his statement that "The Sihalapakkha (Sri Lankan side) represented and transmitted their (the Mahāvihāra) ideas from 12th century in Burma and from 15th in Thailand, but they were not affiliated to the Mahāvihāra as we generally thought."[80] After all if Buddhism in Southeast Asia came directly and only from Sri

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[77]Ibid., pp. 390 ff.

[78]*ER*, II: 395 ff.

[79]*ER*, XIV: 476-477.

[80]Bizot writes in French: "(Le Mahāvihāra ne s'est véritablement implanté et étendu en Asie du Sud-Est...., c'est-à-dire beaucoup plus tard, à partir du XIXème siècle seulement.) Le Siṅhalapakkha (ou "branche singhalaise"), le répésenta et transmis ses idées dès le XIIème siècle en Birmanie et dès le XV-ème siècle au Siam, mais ne lui fut pas affilié comme on l'a généralement cru."

Lanka, the Mahāvihāra, which was the most powerful among all the schools, would have the best chance to spread to Southeast Asia no less than other schools.

The source for Buddhism in Sukhothai was probably from the Dvāravatī tradition as well as from the area south of China. The source of Buddhism in Pagan was from the Pyu and the Mon as well as its own tradition of Tantric Buddhism. There are still traces of practices from the Yunnan area which persist even nowadays. In the Paññāsajātaka we find stories such as Sudhana and Manohara, which is not found in Pāli tradition, but in the Mahāvastu of the Lokottaravādin of Mahāsanghika.[81] In Tamnan Mūlasāsana, a version of Vyāghrī (Mahāsattva) Jātaka in which the bodhisattva cast his body to feed the tiger was found. In Tamnan Mūlasāsanā it is called the story of Brahma-ṛṣi[82] In celebrating one's birthday, monks were usually invited to chant Uṇahīsavijaya. This is probably the reflection to the Uṣṇīsavijayadhāraṇī, common in Mahāyāna countries especially in Yunnan.[83] The reciting of the sūtra is commonly known and called "reciting the mantra," rather than the proper word "paritta" of the Theravādin. Traces of other types of Buddhism in Burma especially in Pagan and the areas close to India are in abundance and well preserved.[84]

In both cases scholars confuse history of a nation with history of religion. Since Burma and Thailand began to emerge as a nation in the eleventh century onward, scholars take the description of religion in that reign also as a starting point for accepting a new faith.

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[81]Jaini, (1966, 1981), See also Norman, (1983), pp. 177-179.

[82]The Vyāghrī Jātaka is found in the Jātakamāla, and in the Jātakastava. In the latter only in a summarized form. See Cummings, (1982), pp. 85-93.

[83]Liebenthal, (1947, 1955).

[84]Luce, (1969), I: 16 ff.

We thus can conclude that the adopting of Theravāda Buddhism of King Aniruddha and King Ramkhamhaeng is neither an "introduction" nor a "conversion" of a new type of Buddhism up to then unknown to them. This is not a turning point in history, but rather a new strategy on the part of the king in applying religion politically. He chose to patronize Buddhism which was prevalent in the area conquered. Otherwise both of the kings would have persecuted all other creeds, but that was not the case. The form of Buddhism in that area appeared to be Theravāda or at least the one that used Pāli as its sacred language.

We have interpreted the data historically. What then happened in terms of practices? Is there anything different in terms of the character of Southeast Asian religiosity before and after this so-called conversion to Theravāda Buddhism?

Epigraphical and archaeological data are scarcely different. The ways people acquired merit are almost exactly the same. They cast the images of Buddha, transferring the good result to their kin and folk, alive or dead, and in most of the cases to all living beings.

The division of these epigraphical data falls into the same categories as those of chapter 4. However, there are minor but interesting differences among these two sets of data.

In the first category, the 'Quotation' inscriptions from canonical works became less in number. The "ye dharmā" stanza seemed to be less popular, but still appears with other texts. Instead we have longer quotations from canonical text or extra-canonical text. We have one quotes passage from Mahāpaṭṭhāna (of the Abhidhammapiṭaka = dealing with Pratītyasamutpāda) which is inscribed circled by Mātikā quoted from the Dhammasaṅgaṇi.[85] Another one has a list of Rūpa realms

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[85]*IT*, V: 53-57.

inscribed from the lower one from the bottom to the highest one and ended with the word 'nirvana'.[86]

But the Four Noble Truths seemed to retain their popularity. Yet they are presented in a different way. The text quoted seemed to be those of extra-canonical, and has the flavor of mystic or magical incantation. There is an inscription describing the characteristics of the Noble Truths by citing only the initial alphabet of the word that describes the Truths. The content of the inscription is as follows:

> The first (initial) word is the own characteristic (of each truth i.e., D for Dukkha, S for Samudaya etc.). (Scholar) having deleted the first should analyse the meaning (or characteristic) of the Four Nobel Truth as Sa (samudaya) Ma (magga) Nī (nirodha); DU (dukkha), Ni, Mā; Sa, Ma, Dū; Sa, Ni, Dū; because (these initial letters) explain the second characteristic and the following.[87]

There is a manuscript called "Explanation of the Heart of the Four Noble Truths" in which the explanation of these sets of letters appears. The meaning is that in each Truth, there are characteristics of other Truths. Therefore, in the First Truth, Dukkha has Sa, Ma Ni = Samudaya, Magga and Nirodha; the second Truth, Samudaya has Du, Ni, Ma = Dukkha, Nirodha and Magga etc. From the context we have to arrive at the conclusion that people who can understand this thing without any help have to be a well-trained scholars in that tradition. For the ordinary people this can

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[86] *IT*, V: 43-46.

[87] *IT*, V: 62-67.

> pathamaṃ sakalakkhanam ekapadam
> dutiyādipadassa nidassanato
> samanīdunimā samadū sanidū
> vibhaje kamato paṭhamena vinā.

For this type of 'cryptic' or 'acronymic' stanza see also *IT*, V: 47 ff.; 50 ff. These inscriptions are dated at around the fourteen century onward. We do not know whether there is a text from which these inscriptions draw. But these stanzas usually have an explanation written in manuscript form. Even if they are of a late date than the inscriptions, they seem to have copied from the old ones, or at least written down after an oral tradition. The scripts are Khmer, or a type of Khmer used in Thailand.

only be taken as sacred text which we have to presume that there is a belief in the magic or power of the sacred text. We find also an inscription which consists of the Ye Dhammā, normal version of Noble Truths and a set of initials which nobody knows what text they stand for.

Another example is the inscription called 'Dharmakāya' which is the equation of part of Buddha's body with Dharma, for example his head is the Sarvajñāna, his hair the nirvana, his forehead the Four Dhyānas etc. At the end of this inscription there is a sentence read one who wish to attain the Buddhahood should often think of this Dharmakāya.[88]

We also find some fairly long texts such as a Relic manual, a manual of auspicious subjects in the Buddha's footprint. All these together with the 'acronymic' ones seem to have their source from manuscripts, or an oral tradition. And we do find manuscripts on these subjects, explaining these acronyms. We thus can conclude that they belong to the manuscript tradition.

In other areas such as Burma the "ye dharmā" stanza seemed to have lost its popularity too. We find more and more inscriptions on the Life of the Buddha, especially on the topic of the seven weeks after the enlightenment.

The eulogy inscriptions follow also the same trend as we have found before in the area. They are mostly composed, and not quoted from a text. Here are some examples of this type of inscription.

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[88]*Prachum.*, III #55.

sabbaññutañāṇapavarasīsaṃṃnibbānārammaṇapavaravilasita-
kesaṃ catutthajjhānapavaralalātaṃ.......etc.

aññesaṃṃdevamanussānambuddho ativirocati
yassa tam uttamangādiñānaṃ sabbaññutādikaṃ
dhammakāyamataṃ buddhaṃ name taṃ lokanāyakaṃ.

imaṃ dhammakāyabuddhalakkhaṇaṃ yogāvacarakulaputtena
tikkhañāṇena sabbaññubuddhabhāvaṃ patthetena
punappunaṃ anussaritabbaṃ

buddhaṃ pathamamkaṃ vande
dhammaṃ vande dutiyakaṃ
sanghaṃ tatiyakaṃ vande
ācariyañ ca catutthakaṃ
ratanattayaṃ namassitvā
sirasā jānuyuggale antarāyaṃ pi ghātatthaṃ
antarāyaṃ pi sabbasatrū vinassanti.[89]

namatthu namo me sabbabuddhānaṃ
namo me sabbadhammānaṃ
namo me sabbasanghānaṃ ratanattayaṃ vandāmi'haṃ.[90]

As for the "Donation inscriptions," they become longer, yet do not really have the flavor of 'orthodoxy' as one might expect for the Theravāda. The events called for commemoration are varied such as the restoration of a stūpa, casting Buddha images, building the whole monastery. We may classify wishes into three categories 1. worldly 2. religious and 3. transferring of merit.

For worldly wishes, we can summarize them into two words, health and wealth. These are the foremost among wishes both for oneself or for others. Other popular concepts are to be reborn with great intelligence, to be reborn in a good family, to be reborn as a beautiful person. Another wish is to ward off bad luck. There is another aspect of this kind of wish, that is the wish that what they build would remain for 5000 years, the period that the doctrine will last.[91]

For religious wishes, the most frequently mentioned is to become a Buddha.[92] Side by side with this is to be reborn in the time of Maitreya.[93] The third is the wish to

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89*Prachum.*, III #46, note that the word 'satrū' is in a quasi-sanskrit form, it should be written 'sattu' in Pāli.

90*Prachum.*, IV #86.

91*Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya, and Ava*, p. 5.

92See for examples inscriptions quoted below and also *IT*, V: 155; for inscriptions in Burma see *Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya, and Ava*, p. 21.

93*IT*, V: 83, 84, 187; and *Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya, and Ava*, pp. 2-3.

attain nirvana.[94] It is worth noting that for a Theravāda country, the third should be the most popular. However, as the sources come to be, the request to become a Buddha is the most popular one, for examples:

> sirinandavhayo dhīro saddho saddhammadāyako
> tipumayaṃ buddhabimbaṃ karomi nahutādhikaṃ.
>
> puññenānena so'ham amitabhavabhavaṃ yāva
> sandhāvamāno
> medhāvī cārurūpo madhuratarasaro sabbasatthāticheko
> metteyyo sīladhāro varavividhadhano-nomadānādadāyo
> mocento tāva vajje kusalaratirato-nāgate homi buddho.[95]
>
> siddhir astu
> yo yojjharājaparamo paramoracakka-
> vattīti nāma vidito imam ettha thūpaṃ
> kārāpayaṃ ṭhapayi mārajidhātuyanto
> assāpi kālavikalo ayam āsi thūpo.
>
> tassoraso sakalabhūtalarājarājo
> rājādhirājapavaro puna kārayāno
> thūpaṃ purādhikataraṃ imam assa canto
> gabbe ṭhapeti munino varadhātuyomā.
>
> thūpe pasanno vararājarājā
> hemādipūjāhibhipūjiyetaṃ
> puññena me tena anāgatateham
> buddho bhaveyyan'ti varaṅkaro'ti.[96]

Wishes of the worldly kind are mentioned as wishes for others. The first among them is parent, then cousins etc., up to all beings.[97] This states clearly the concept of transferring of merit.

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[94] *Prachum.*, III #77

> nibbānapaccayo hotu no anāgate kāle niccam imasmin
> attabhāve āyuvannādividdhidhammāvahaṃ.

And also *IT*, V: 170.

[95] *IT*, V: 106-108.

[96] IT, V: 159-164.

[97] See *IT*, V: 188, 190; *Inscriptions of Pagan, Pinya, and Ava*, pp. 7, 9, 14, 22 ff.

An inscription written by a royal scholar (rājapandita) for a Queen can be drawn as an example of wishes;-

> By this merit may my parents and my husband King Mahādharma-adhirājā as well as his mother Śrīdharmarājamātā, cousins and non-cousin, all be happy, without dukkha, without any danger. May they by this merit be reborn in the six heavens and enjoy the happiness as they wish. May I by this merit be reborn as a man and be able to hear the supreme teaching of Maitreya teaching. May I have chances to acquire merit of three kinds (dāna, sīla, samādhi). May I be praised by Maitreya among others. May none be equal to me in merit, in beauty, in fame, in having long life and in treasure and wealth. In every birth if I don't allow, let no one can take them from me. Let all my wealth be beneficial to all poor being. May I, who am sinking in this transmigration cold by water which has only depth without banks, attain the enlightenment as Buddhas. May the kings who will ascend the throne of this country in the future, the noble, the good people, all praise my deeds. May things worthy of worshipping in this monastery be prosperous because of my prīti in good deeds.[98]

If we compare the above data with the field work carried on in present day Thailand as reported by Caldarola, there is not so much difference between the past and the present. The report is as follows:

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[98]*Prachum.*, IV #93 face II.

iminā puññakammena mama mātāpitā ubho
sāmiko me mahādhammarājādhirājanāmako
sridhammarājamātā ca ye ca ñātī aññātikā
sabbeva sukhitā hontu niddukkhā niruppaddavā
mama puññānubhāvena sabbe te tidivaṃgatā
chasu saggesu sampattiṃ anubhuñjantu kāmato
mama puññānubhāvena puriso homanāgate
metteyyasseva buddhassa aggadhammam sunāmahaṃ
tassāpi puññasambhāram muddhāram pacināmahaṃ
parisāganamajjhamhi so mam buddho pasaṃsatu
dānādināsamo añño rūpenāpi yasena vā
āyunā dhanarāsīhi mā me hotu bhave bhave
mesam nādātukāmassa koci sakkotu ganhituṃ
apica mama santasaṃ daliddānaṃ payojanaṃ
gambhīrāpāradānādi sāgarehi susitale
nimujjitvā munindā va sambodhiṃ pāpunāmaham
imasmiṃ nagare rajjaṃ kāressanti anāgate
khattiyā ceva uggā ca dhammikā ye mahāyasā
sabbe te anumodantu puññakamme mayā kate
pūjāvatthūni vaddhantu puññakammaratā idhā'ti.

A sample of 79 family heads of northeastern Thai village were requested to rank the eight types of religious acts they felt most meritorious. While there was no complete agreement among the villagers, the distribution of the answers showed a remarkable pattern, and the majority of the respondents agreed by and large on the hierarchical position of each category of action in relation to the rest. The final ranking of merit-making acts was as follows:

1. Completely financing the build of a wat (i.e., a monastery) (this was considered to be a most meritorious act.)
2. Either becoming a monk oneself or having a son become a monk.
3. Contributing money to repair of a wat or giving kathin (post-lent festival) gifts.
4. Giving food daily to monks.
5. Observing the Buddhist Sabbath.
6. Strictly observing the five precept.[99]

Strictly speaking this hierarchy goes against what has been recommended by the Buddha or by the monks. The observing of the five precepts should have the highest priority, since it is the 'paṭipattipūjā', worshipping the Buddha by observing the Dharma. However, this has been the case not just now but also in India during the Buddha's lifetime: people have a tendency to make merits by way of material contributions rather than practicing the Dharma.

Neither can we say that the tendency was much different between Buddhism practiced in the area before eleventh century and after that century. The only change seems to be that there is less quotation inscription. There are more cryptic inscriptions, probably due to the concept of magical syllable or as aide-memoire. They are found in Thailand. This may be a result of exposure to the Tantric Buddhism of the Khmer, or the reminiscence of Buddhism in Yunnan. However, we do not have any data of this kind from those areas either. The problem remains to be studied.

One thing that we can state for sure from the epigraphical data is that the Pāli tradition has always been present in this area, Burma and Thailand.

In addition to epigraphical data we have data such as chronicles composed mostly after the Sihalese stereotype: the Mahāvamsa and the Dīpavamsa, the legend

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[99]Caldarola, (1982), p. 401-402, footnote 1.

or the annals of Relics, important images of Buddha. In Burma we have the Kalyānī Sīmā inscriptions. The contents of these chronicles are usually a history of the Sangha, the relationships between Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. The records pertain usually to the royal support for Buddhism and the establishment or the purification of the Sangha. They scarcely mention the word "Theravāda", but are usually concerned with the correct way of ordaining a monk in order to form a perfect Sangha according to the Vinaya text.

Then what is it that can be called Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia? For people who profess to Theravāda Buddhism, it is the Buddhism. They do not actually scrutinize the scripture or try to make a distinction of foreign substances which are not Theravādin. Another important point is that the label "Theravāda Buddhism" is western. Concepts of different schools of Buddhism such as Sarvāstivāda, Mahāsanghika or Mahāyāna are very remote to Southeast Asian ways of thinking.

It is a complex system of beliefs and practices, yet should be seen as one total system. This type of system is possible, or permissible to happen, through the concept of moral hierarchy. The concept of internalization, suggested by Spiro, or synthesis, syncretism, is not evident here as we have shown in the last chapter. The situation is that of symbiosis or co-existence, and not of internalization or syncretization.

What a Southeast Asian Buddhist knows as "Buddhism" can be described in terms of the Three Jewels of Buddhism.

The Buddha is the foremost among men and among gods. He is sometimes, or most of the time, considered the great god who is granting boons and helping man escape from suffering. But this does not mean that he is the almighty God or the creator of the universe. People recognize that his power, his wisdom are due to his own merits accumulated for a very long time. It is the authority based on the recognition of merit rather than just the authority by itself.

The Dharma is what the Buddha taught. It is the duty of monks to preserve it. Laymen follow the teaching and observe these rules according to their ability. We might be astonished to find that very few Buddhist know what the four Noble Truths are. Doctrinally the most common known teachings are "dukkha, anicca, puñña, karma, nibbāna, pāramī." We find these words used in their everyday speech. However this does not mean that the description and the definition in the texts remain in this kind of usage. For "dukkha and anicca" the meaning more or less is close to the scripture, but does not have the depth of the interpretation. "Puñña" comes to have two meanings: the making of merit and the good result of the past karma. The word "karma" itself, most of the time, means "vipāka" especially the bad "vipāka." "Nibbāna" is understood in different ways according to one's education. It is understood as an immortal city "amatanagara" in the cosmological texts. "Pāramī", in Thai culture, accumulative good deeds which probably are equal to good karma.

Nevertheless, the understanding of the word "karma" as such does not mean that they do not know the doctrine of "karma" taught in the texts, but rather that they do not understand it in its entirety. The doctrine of "karma" is simply understood as one must experience the result of one's karma. There is also evidence that bad deeds can affect the whole community, if it was condoned. Since the word 'karma' has been used to stand for bad deed (pāpakarma), it has taken the meaning of sin, 'pāpa.'

In practicing the Buddhist Dharma, making merit, what Spiro called "Kammatic" is probably the most popular. And the concept that is inseparable from the making of merit is the transferring of merit, "puññānumodana or pattidāna." Bechert thinks that this aspect of Theravāda Buddhism was incorporated later, defining it as "noncanonical belief." He said:

> In addition to this responsibility for education, the Sangha had to offer religious benefits for the lay people, e.g., the protective power of recitation of the so called *paritta* texts. Here I should mention that

> Theravāda Buddhism has incorporated some noncanonical beliefs which were of great importance for this development, e.g., the theorem of the transmission of religious merit to the deceased (*puññānumodanā* and *pattidāna*). On the basis of this concept, the monks participated in funerals, and religious gifts in commemoration of the ancestors were donated to the Sangha. This too helped to develop the Sangha into a factor of social life.[100]

It is true that the means by which the Sangha or individual monks involve themselves with the society is mainly through the concept of the transmission of merit. However, it is not acceptable to say that this concept is "non-canonical." There are numerous instances in the Suttantapiṭaka which clearly manifest this aspect of Buddhism. One has only to recall the story of Bimbisāra and the "preta" in the Tirokuḍḍasutta as an obvious example of this theorem.[101]

Another misunderstanding in the issue of this concept is that it originated in the Mahāyāna tradition, especially when the meritorious act was meant of "all beings." Schopen has convincingly proved that the very concept of making merit for the benefit of "all beings" is one of Hīnayāna Buddhism.[102] And our data shown above reveal that this assertion is not true.

The Sangha, the community, for the masses is perceived through the institution of monastery. Monks are considered to be examplary in behavior and the leader of the community. Monastery is equal to the town hall or the communal meeting place. In the old days it serves almost like an administrative unit. It serves as school providing the education for boys and girls, and men acquired higher education, usually by being ordained or becoming a novice.

These three components form what the Southeast Asian Buddhist called Buddhasāsanā. In Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia, what is called a nation in the

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[100]Bechert, (Aug, 1970), p. 773. See also Gombrich, (1967).

[101]Khuddakapāṭha, p. 6.

[102]Schopen, (1985), pp. 34 ff.

Western world can be expressed by three words: Palace = the King, Monastery = the monks and Household = the family. The king seems to the middle factor here since he leads both the secular and the ecclesiastical.

In what sense then can these countries be labelled as Theravāda Buddhist states? All the spirits and gods, be they of indigenous or Brahmainacal origin became Buddhist. At least Buddha would be the greatest among the spirits. Others would yield to his supremacy. In parallel the king attains the power by supporting all beliefs but he himself is the protector of the believers of Buddhism.

The study of Buddhism in Southeast Asia cannot be fruitful with all the leaning toward doctrinal difference. Neither can the development of Buddhism in the region be understood by imposing the concept of dichotomy between "Great" and "Little" traditions, nor by posing the tension between the higher and the lower kinds of beliefs. Since all these do not bear the actual beliefs of the people. They do not see the dichotomy or the tension. Their perception permits the situation to be polylithic such that all these beliefs need not be put in "one" faith as a Christian who has to profess only to one and the only God. The confirmation ritual is probably one of the remotest ideologies of Southeast Asian people.

If we disregard the label "Theravāda Buddhist Countries", the picture seems to be easier to conceive. There are some prominent "cults" figuring in Southeast Asian Buddhist countries such as cult of relics, images, votive table, amulet, recitation of mantra, Maitreya, the future Buddha. These cults existed before the 11th century, since we find votive tablets, stūpas, images of Buddha as early as the fourth century A.D: all these not conceived as belonging to that or this school or sect. In the chronicles it is not the school that is important but the purity of the ordination and the lineage.

What seems to be valid to study is the practices and the ritual or cults of different types. How people apply them in the same ceremony would yield us the

insight of how these "supposedly contradictory" creeds can work for the benefit of the peoples of Southeast Asia.

The "Ascendency" of "Theravāda" Buddhism

And yet with all these confusions between terms and actual practices, we cannot deny that Theravāda Buddhism has ascended to the rank of the prominent creed of mainland Southeast Asia. But what we see in the "Theravāda Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia" is a result of a long process. And the process has not finished. There are now in Burma and Thailand new movements toward better understanding of Buddhism as well as new forms of interpretation to both the texts and the practices. Becoming a Buddhist country as Thailand and Burma was not a result of an introduction of a new faith. Neither can we say that it was only due to the effort of kings such as Aniruddha or Ramkhamhaeng. The peoples of both areas also contributed to its formation. Buddhism as an institution itself also serves as an important dynamics in the process. And above all the conditions dictated by political, social circumstances within and outside the regions too affect and help shape the present picture of Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

Dynamics in the ascendency of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia

There are three main dynamics involving the ascendency of Theravāda Buddhism. The first is Buddhism itself, the second the dynamics originated from within Southeast Asia, and the third from outside.

With regard to Buddhism in its components such as the organization of the Sangha, emphasis on ethical codes rather than social code tied with the caste system has probably became the first universalized practice in India. In creating a nation Aśoka made use of Buddhism, and thus overcame tribal barriers. When Buddhism came to Southeast Asia, even if it was considered as something Indian like

Brahmanism, there was a difference between them. Buddhism has always been connected with moral codes and practice of making merits. On the other hand, Brahmanism was regarded as having ritualistic function, mainly linked to the court.[103] Epigraphical data show that Brahmanism and local beliefs do really not involve in the concept of making and transferring merits. We do not have any case showing hostility between the Brahmanism and Buddhism in Southeast Asia. The only event that came close to that situation was in Cambodia in the early thirteenth century. But it usually involved only transforming the Buddha's images into Hindu gods or vice versa. Tambiah is right in saying that the relation between the brahman and the king is reversed in Southeast Asian context from that of Indian.[104] Brahmans were employed in the court not for religious purpose, but for ritualistic. Tambiah writes:

> ...Dharma, conformity to the world order, is more important than artha (power and wealth), which in turn is above kama, immediate enjoyment. In terms of social order dharma corresponds to the brahman priest, artha or temporal power to the king or Kshatriya, and kama to the rest of society's rank.
>
> It is my thesis, which I cannot substantiate here but hope to establish elsewhere, that in further India the relation between priest and king that prevailed in Indian was reversed, and that this transformed relation between a divinized king and the brahman priest can best be seen in the royal cult of Devaraja in Cambodia. The same relation, or perhaps an even greater elaboration of it, was the hallmark of the Buddhist polities of Burma and Siam where the king, focal entity of society, united in his person both Indra and bodhisattva, god and Buddha-to-be. Thus in Siam, for instance, the king was divinized by a small number of brahmans, who were employed as court ritualists but did not represent the superior values of dharma (morality) in relation to artha (force and power) of the king. Kingship appropriated both these values, and also became the protector of Buddhism as the state religion.[105]

Even if we do not agree with him in some points such as his description of kingship which he totally neglected the indigenous component of the concept. We

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103Coedès, (1968), pp. 33 ff.

104Tambiah, (1980), pp. 253 ff.

105Ibid.

have to agree with him that brahmans did not represent cue-givers for morality. The duty has been long accorded to Buddhism. And the king, being the mediator between the spiritual and the practical world, represents the norm in a living form, leading the people morally as well as politically.

Buddhism, because of having the Sangha, remains somehow distinct, yet closer to the people. We have seen that Brahmanic gods have been categorized with the indigenous gods. But the Buddha and the Arhats have never been considered in that manner. We thus can assert that the qualities in Buddhism itself help sustain its popularity in the mainland Southeast Asia.

The dynamics within the region itself can be seen as the effort of kings and the people in promoting the creed. In earlier stage we do not really have any evidence that the king had used Buddhism politically as the Khmer used Brahmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism. But we have some indication that the king or the chief participated in merit-making with the people. We can surmise that sanctuaries such as stūpas and monasteries must have served as communal places where people gathered for both religious and non-religious purposes.

In Thailand, at least in thirteenth century, in the famous inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng, the King had already assigned administrative rank to the Sangha. He appointed the Sangharāja. We do not have any evidence whether this had been done before that date. Judging from the term using without any explanation, the system could probably have been in use before his time.

In Burma, Burmese kings from Aniruddha onward had also used Buddhism politically and economically. In fact they were more economically oriented than the data found in Thailand in which the king only involved in the Sangha by granting and organizing the administrative personnel of the Sangha. Through this device kings of both kingdom thereby controlled the monks.

In both cases this political application of Buddhism had become a device to govern a nation which is loosely connected. This is probably due to the fact that the structure of the Sangha as an crganization can be more easily controlled. Moreover, the authority supported by spiritual agents was usually preferred in the region.

What had been used by the Khmer earlier was now used in almost the same manner in Pagan and Sukhothai kingdoms. And from then onward the political power as well as religion spread from the east to Cambodia as had been the case in the earlier centuries with Brahmanism and Mahāyāna from Cambodia toward Dvāravatī in the eleventh century. The only point of difference was that in the latter cases people seem to have dictated the circumstances. As we have shown above the areas conquered by both kings were Theravāda Buddhist. The king, while maintaining his status as god, Brahmanistically or indigenously, differentiated himself from the people. At the same time by embracing Buddhism, he became identified with and assimilated into the majority of the people. The use of Buddhism as administrative device helped solidify the status of Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

Another important point is that there is a close tie between the Buddhist Sangha, the king and the people. The purification of the Sangha most of the time was initiated by the king, and not by the Sangha itself.

Not all the kings lavishly supported Buddhism. We find in a chronicle of Burma a complaint to the effect that the king is too attached to the spirit cults, and not to the teaching of the Buddha.[106] In Thailand in the Ayuthya period, Brahmanical rituals ranked very high and were often performed in the all the royal ceremonies. But in subsequent periods the kings became more and more Buddhist. They prefixed the Buddhist chanting ritual to all other rituals. Therefore it was not until the nineteenth century that Theravāda Buddhism really emerged as the state religion in Thailand.

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[106] Luce, (1969), I: 49.

And it was not until the early twentieth century that Rāmā VI issued the Palace Law that the King of Thailand had to be a Buddhist. This probably was a result from his being educated in England where the monarch has to be Anglican.

Dynamics from outside are mainly derivred the political situation in India. By the eleventh century onward India had been invaded and overcome by Islam. There remained only Sri Lanka as the only source of Buddhism. Coincidentally the reformation of the śāsana happened continuously from the eleventh and twelfth centuries in Sri Lanka.

Therefore, we conclude that the received version of the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia is affected by how scholars conceive Theravāda Buddhism characteristically and historically. Characteristically speaking, scholars have confused Theravāda Buddhism with primitive Buddhism, Sinhalese Buddhism, orthodox Buddhism. Historically, as a consequence, Theravāda in Southeast Asia did not have any real impact in Southeast Asia until the eleventh century. Mahāyāna Buddhism was thought as preceding it. This then again affects the writing of history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia as a whole. As we would expect, it would start only in the eleventh century onward. The period before that is, in most cases, neglected, or mentioned in a passing-by manner. Of course we sometimes find the introduction of Buddhism discussed, however, the main issue was normally not Buddhism, but rather to identify Suvarṇabhūmi. The writing of history of Buddhism has long been in the hand of historians, who cannot ignore religious data. But the attention which Buddhism received is a second hand one. Their main task is to write a history of a nation, or nations. But since they have not paid any attention to the data before the eleventh century, they interpret data in Aniruddha and Ramkhamhaeng as a conversion to a 'new' faith, coinciding with the emerging of a new state.

The ascending to the present state of Theravāda Buddhism, or more preferably, Buddhism in Southeast Asia, therefore, should be seen as a long process involving numerous factors. It should not be seen either as an 'introduction' or a 'conversion.'

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters we have set out to present an early history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. The division used is rather a prevalent one which scholars who write on the topic usually follow. A history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia is normally divided into two parts, the early and Theravāda Buddhism. The early part of the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia is supposed to have begun with the introduction of Buddhism leading up to the eleventh century when Theravāda Buddhism, especially from Sri Lanka, as normally accepted, gained its ground, and become the "state religion."

Since epigraphical data which are found in Southeast Asian countries are usually neglected by scholars who write a book on Southeast Asian history. In our study we have tried to incorporate as much data as possible from these inscriptions. The reason why they have not been used may be due to the language barriers: they are not only in different languages, Indic and vernaculars, but also are in ancient form of those languages. And above all, historians are not interested in the content of these inscriptions, since they usually contain only materials concerning religions, and thus can provide very little data on history.

For archaeological data the interpretation is mainly in the hand of art historians who cannot agree among themselves on the dating of the materials. And the criteria utilized in assigning sectarian or religious affiliation to these archaeological finds are rather facile as we have pointed out in chapter four.

But these data, even if they are primary, scarcely provide us the details of religious life of the peoples, and certainly are not the full record of all the events which had happened to Buddhism in Southeast Asia.

To supplement the aforementioned data, we have recoursed to the present state of Buddhism. The perception of religion of the peoples has been taken into account to explain and reconstruct the religious situation. We find that, in spite of the label "Theravāda" being assigned to Southeast Asia, there are also other beliefs and practices which are not Buddhist. Scholars have been perplexed by this fact which has led them to explain it in different ways. But instead of solving the problem, they seem to get themselves entangled in more troubles. Their studies have profoundly affected the picture of Theravāda Buddhism as presented to the world.

And finally we focus on "Theravāda Buddhism." Its characteristics, history and its ascendency have been reviewed in line with the latest scholarship and data.

We shall deal with our results on the study of early Buddhism in Southeast Asia in relation to other creeds in three aspects, namely, its structure, characteristics and history.

As for the structure of religions in Southeast Asia, we discover that religions from India seem to have settled in Southeast Asia into two different zones. The Theravāda Buddhist one comprised the Pyu, the Mon and the Dvāravatī traditions, covering the eastern half of mainland Southeast Asia. The Brāhmanic-Mahāyānistic one comprised the Khmer, Cham and the archipelago. The data show that Buddhism of the Hīnayāna schools spread into these areas a little earlier than Mahāyāna Buddhism. Objects pertaining to Buddhism in the second century have already been found, and by the fourth century we have inscriptions whose contents had been quoted from the Pāli scripture.

In case of Brahmanism the impact was felt at around almost the same time. But the nature of the impact seems to be different. References to Brahmanism were

limited to court rituals. And most of the time it was used for purposes other than religion. Brahmans were mostly in the royal service.

The reasons for this division are trade relations and the religious situation in India. Around the early centuries of the Christian era, Buddhism spread all over India and to Sri Lanka. Buddhism was disseminated from these areas, especially South India and Sri Lanka, to Southeast Asia. The route used at this early stage was the coastal and transpenisular ones. Southeast Asia was not just a station or a passing through place to China as normally thought to be. And the trade was not one-sided as we have thought before, since cities located out of the routes also participated in the trade. Indian or other merchants must have traded with the cities already existing at the time. These relations must have brought Southeast Asian people into contact with Indian cultures, Buddhism included.

Yet it is hard to discern what happened at that time when they first encountered the new faith. We do not have any adequate data to answer this question. We can only speculate that they did not really sense the difference between their own beliefs and the Indian ones. As Mus points out, both areas share numerous concepts and ideas.

Later the route shifted toward the south to the insular and archipelago areas. This coincided with the development of Mahāyāna and the formation of "Hinduism." We therefore find Brahmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism in these areas and in the areas closely related to them such as Champa and Cambodia. In these areas most of the time Brāhmanism was more prominent than Mahāyāna Buddhism. Of course in some periods Mahāyāna was flourishing as a result of the royal patronage, but they usually short-lived. And most of the times they were mentioned together. The question here is not on which belief had been chosen, but rather how it was used. There are strong evidences that both were used politically and economically. They provided the king with spiritual power to administer his kingdom through religious

establishments. The result is that objects and inscriptions in these two traditions were found in abundance in Cambodia, Champa and in Indonesia. The contents of these inscriptions are apart from the eulogies of gods and kings list of donations, animate and inanimate, informations concerning land use and revenue collected from the land. They suggest the economic and administrative aspects, rather than purely religious. They usually have the curses to the people who would take these donated things away. But interestingly they usually lack the wishes of the donors, and for that matter the transferring of the merit. Contrasting to these are inscriptions in Dvāravatī tradition and later on in Mon and Burmese areas. In these inscriptions we usually find the donors' wishes and the transferring of merit. The Burmese in the eleventh and twelfth centuries were also in favor of putting the curses in donation inscriptions, but this is usually followed by wishes and blessing for those who rejoiced in the merit made.

The Buddhist zone also shows influences from Brahmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism. This probably was the result from the expansion of the Khmer mandala in case of Dvāravatī. In the case of the area in Burma, it was probably direct from India. In most cases the influences are confined to the seaports and the northern part of Burma which are close to India by sea route and land route. Yet as a religion, Brāhmanism had never been strong in this Buddhist zone.

There remain two questions to be asked. What kind of Buddhism it was in this early days? And from where did it come?

For the first question we have to be careful concerning the concept of sects or schools of Buddhism and also the principles which we use to determine those schools. We shall have to postpone this issue to the next part when we deal with the concepts about Buddhism.

Suffice it to say that in the Buddhist zone, Pāli tradition has been continually presented. Since Pāli texts, including Abhidharma were quoted in inscriptions, we

have to conclude that there belonged to the Theravāda tradition. And they are more numerous than Sanskrit ones. In fact in the western zone, we do not really have any Sanskrit inscriptions of which contents are Buddhist except for the "ye dharmā" stanza. Early Buddhist inscriptions in Sanskrit are found in the insular and the archipelago regions of Southeast Asia, but they too do not contain any data which can help us to identify their sectarian affiliation.

Nevertheless, we do find indications that other schools must have also exist. But the data are not sufficient to make any conclusive statement. Some have suggested that Sarvāstivādins were flourishing in Burma and Thailand in these early days. However, the evidence they used are too inconclusive. The "ye dharmā" stanza in Sanskrit cannot be used to substantiate the thesis. Neither can a bas-relief depicting story which is not found in the Pāli text override the other evidence inspired by the Pāli source.

As for the source of this Buddhism in Southeast Asia, Ray proposes that it must have come to Burma from Andhra and South India, but rejects Sri Lanka. However, Sri Lanka has always been the center of Pāli Buddhism, and thus has every right to be a source of Southeast Asian Buddhism. It maintained close relations to South India, actually to India as a whole. It certainly appeared in the list of seaports in the Niddesa and the Milindapañha. The list which Ray uses to support his thesis on how Buddhism came to Burma. We do not deny Ray's thesis, but to disregard Sri Lanka seems to be very inadequate here.

Evidence found in Dvāravatī tradition put us beyond doubt that Sri Lanka was in close relation to the area, and it was one of the source of this early Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia. Since we find an inscription mentioning the city of Anurādhapura. Another inscriptions quoted three stanza from Telakaṭāhagāthā, small poem composed by a Thera of Sri Lanka yet not so well-known even in Sri Lanka. Archaeological finds also support our assertion. We find the Buddha's images in the

Amarāvatī style with strong influence from Sri Lanka. There are also close resemblances between the architecture of Dvāravatī and Anurādhapura.

This early Theravāda Buddhism has survived several changes in history of Southeast Asia. It seems to have persisted amid the political, ethnical developments occurring in the subsequent centuries. And by the twelfth century it spread westward to Cambodia and Laos, and northward to north Burma and north Thailand. Thus we arrive at the present structure of religion of Southeast Asia.

When we talk about characteristic of Buddhism or Theravāda Buddhism, we are confronting a new sets of problem. Most of them originate from the western ways of thinking. The suffix "ism" and the names such as "Hinduism" "Brahmanism" are purely scholarly tools to study religions of the East. The task then is to define them. And to so is not easy, since the question is formed within a wrong context. With it comes all the concepts and approaches used in the study of Judeo-Christian religions. It is quite common to see scholars in this field, usually missionaries, asking questions: What is your "holy" text? What is your creation myth? And above all as a Christian would think, if one says one is a Buddhist, he has to be a Buddhist as prescribed in the "holy" text. Another trend is to seek other religions which are highly rationalized. And they find "Theravāda Buddhism."

Of course names of different schools appear in the Buddhist texts themselves. But we cannot say for sure that their concept of schools was the same as ours nowadays. There are different principles used in naming these schools. Therefore in using them we have to be careful. Otherwise we will use a historical term for a conceptual one, or philosophical for disciplinary.

The term "Theravāda Buddhism" has been abused conceptually and historically. With it comes the misunderstanding and misapplication of the term. The term is scarcely used in the Pāli texts. It appears a few times in the Mahāvamsa and

the Dīpavamsa. In the local chronicles of Southeast Asia, to which we so far we had access, it has not yet been found.

The problems probably are caused by the concepts of Buddhism built up by German and British scholars who studied Buddhism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were of the opinion that Theravāda Buddhism was the closest to the primitive Buddhism taught by the Buddha. In fact in the Indian context we cannot really look for "pure" or "primitive" aspect of an "ism." Since they emerge out of the same context, they are Indian. Basic morality is the same among them. Philosophically, they have been inspired more or less by same intellectual environments. It is true that they then try to differentiate themselves from each other. But if being a religion means what is practicing by the masses, these differences are scarcely felt among the people.

Later on when anthropologists examine the situation, they find something other than Buddhism, and have to find ways to explain them. They thus come up with theories such as "syncretism," "synthesis" and "internalization." But the perception of Southeast Asian peoples of religion, if we may use the term, is different from the monotheistic tradition. They are in a position to accept more than one beliefs or practices. The conflicts, seen by western scholars, nay also local scholars trained in the Western world, are most of the time very foreign to a Thai or a Burmese. And this was the fact noticed, yet neglected by both Tambiah and Terwiel. It has never been considered seriously as a crucial concept which can explain the religious situation of Southeast Asia because scholars usually desire to show on the one hand, the syncretism of these beliefs, on the other hand, the tensions and the conflicts among them.

In chapters four, five and six we have shown how the peoples of Southeast Asia express themselves religiously. In terms of practices there is but little difference even between Brāhmanic and Buddhist practices. Nor can we say that there is much

difference between Indian religions and indigenous ones. People donate materials, cast images, build sanctuary etc. Their expressions were the same, but they were expressed through different channels. The only concept that can be said to be particular to the Buddhist practices in Southeast Asia, past or present, is the merit-making and the transferring of merits.

In our context, Theravāda Buddhism has to be understood as Buddhism as practiced in Southeast Asian countries. And when the term "Theravāda Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia" is used, it only means "Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia." This is due to the fact that we cannot really label religious beliefs and practices in this area as "purely" Buddhism, not to mention "pure Theravāda Buddhism" or "orthodox Theravāda Buddhism."

Only in the case of the purity of the lineage of the ordination that we can say it is Theravāda. Yet even in this case it only means the authorized version of the ordination ceremony sanctified by the Sangha of Sri Lanka. A better term should thus be used here: "Sihalese Buddhism." And it should be confine to the history of the Buddhist Sangha only, not to history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia as a whole.

The term "Theravāda Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia" has been used by scholars to denote first of all countries which show strong influence of a kind of Buddhism in "contrast" with those in the Mahāyāna tradition. Therefore it is rather a geographic term employed in describing religions in different regions, rather than a true religious term. This contrastive usage has caused us numerous problems as we have shown in the previous chapter.

Yet we cannot deny that in Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand, Buddhism, especially that which uses Pāli as their sacred language, prevails. And moreover, people profess that they are Buddhist, because they are following or rather accepting the norms of the Buddhist Sangha. These are the facts that we cannot neglect in studying religious conditions in the area. It is not enough just to say that Theravāda

Buddhism was introduced into the area from the eleventh century onward. Since this does not answer why this only is chosen and accepted by the kings and the peoples of Southeast Asia. We purpose that its supremacy is due to the fact that Theravāda Buddhism has always present in this western zone of mainland Southeast Asia, since the beginning of the relations between this area and India. Buddhism, very probable Theravāda Buddhism, was the prevailing religion among common peoples. The process of ascending to this present status of Theravāda Buddhism is a continuing one. It involves besides the royal patronage numerous factors such as the pattern of trading, political conditions of Southeast Asia as well as those of India and Sri Lanka, and the concept of religion among the peoples of Southeast Asia. This process is still much alive in countries such as Burma and Thailand.

Historically, Buddhism has been presented by scholars into two periods. In the early period, that is to say before eleventh century A.D., it was described as mixture of schools of Hīnayāna and then Mahāyāna. Scholars of the Southeast Asian origin assert that their Buddhism is the direct line from the Buddha or at least from the Sangha of the Third council in Aśoka reign. We have show that there is not enough evidence to support this assertion.

The concept commonly in use for the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia is the "introduction." In the early period when historians thought that there was hardly any primary documentation on the issue, the situation was presented as vague and uncertain as to how, when and what kind of Buddhism had been introduced. This is probably because history has been thought of as succession of events. In fact we have materials pertaining of religions more than anything else. But they were not records of events, rather records of religious expressions. Therefore they were regarded as having no historical value. Inscriptions, especially the "Quotation

inscriptions" were scarcely published, and thus hardly have any impact in the writing of a religious history in Southeast Asia.

The second part of the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia is said to have taken place from the eleventh century onward. This event has a close connection to the expansion of power of two great kings, Aniruddha of Pagan and Ramkhamhaeng of Sukhothai. The story is presented by western scholars also in the fashion of the "changing" of the creed to Theravāda type of Buddhism. In fact Burmese and Thai sources never use the word "Theravāda" in this context at all. For them this is Buddhism they have known without any breaking line. All the data show that this is not an "introduction" or a "conversion." The expansion of these two great kings was not the crucial factor of the spread of Theravāda Buddhism into the areas they had conquered. In the case of King Aniruddha, he had to conformed with the prevailing creed. And in the case of King Rāmkhamhaeng, Buddhism had existed long before his reign.

Buddhism therefore had been in the area where both kings ruled. In the stories related in the Sāsanavamsa and in the inscription of King Rāmkhamhaeng they seemed to know Buddhism before. In the case of Burma the Samaṇakuttakas were presented as defected Buddhism, in contrast to the new one coming from the south of Burma. But if we look at the facts carefully, what the chronicle says is that the kings of Pagan supported them and thus they were flourishing in Pagan. This does not rule out the possibility of the existence of other Sangha in Pagan. Neither can one say that the people of Pagan belong to this Samaṇakuttaka tradition.

In the case of King Ramkhamhaeng, we do not even have any other tradition being present. Buddhism there seems to have been established long before his reign. Cities all around Sukhothai such as Haribhuṇjaya and Lampang to the north and cities in the Dvāravatī traditions had become Buddhist long before the twelfth century. Local chronicles show that there were inter-marriages between prices and princesses

of these "kingdoms." We can surmise that Buddhism also spread through this means. In the inscription, the state had already had the devise to govern the Sangha. The coming of the Araññika (forest monks) tradition did not mean the suppression of the former Sangha. They constituted one whole Sangha patronized by the king. The type of Buddhism is deduced from the description in the inscription as Theravāda Buddhism. But this fact is not so obvious, since the inscription is not specific on this point. The place where the Sangharāja came from was Nakhon Si Thammarat. Since this city had always maintained close connection with Sri Lanka, Buddhism of this Sangharāja was believed to be that of Sri Lanka. And at that time it had been unified by King Parakkamabāhu. The result of this unification is known academically as "Sinhalese Theravāda Buddhism."

The crucial point in the understanding of the situation is that it was not an "introduction," but rather a "continuation." Neglecting the history of the Pāli tradition which has always presented in Burma and Thailand without any interruption, scholars begin a history of Buddhism of Southeast Asia only from the eleventh century. Early history of Buddhism is regarded as uncertain, or as not so important. The impact of Buddhism was not felt until the time when Aniruddha accepted the Theravāda creed. Of course since Buddhism associated with Southeast Asia has always been thought of as Theravāda Buddhism, to write a history of Buddhism of the area is only to begin with the "introduction" of Theravāda Buddhism.

The issue then is confounded with the original place of this Buddhism. Normally an author on this subject would regard Sri Lanka as the source of "Theravāda Buddhism" of Southeast Asia. But the local authors trace its origin to the Buddha's time or at least to Aśoka's time. Since for them Buddhism is "Buddhasāsana", the teaching of the Buddha, and not "Theravāda." Certainly in a later time they recognize Sri Lanka as the source. But if we look carefully it is the source for the purification of the Sangha, not of Buddhism as a whole. We find in most

cases the old Sangha persisted after the new group from Sri Lanka was established. Religious relationships between Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand involve around the issue of introducing and re-introducing the pure lineage of the Sangha. A new lineages may be introduced but they are considered as "Buddhasāsana" not as a school of Buddhism. In Thailand they form one "Sangha" under the direction of the Supreme Patriarch appointed by the king.

The only place which we can really apply the word "introduction" is the case of Cambodia where Brahmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism had shown very strong influence. But by the thirteenth century it had become Theravāda Buddhism. Pali was used instead of Sanskrit for the royal inscriptions. Even in loan words the Pāli form is preferred. In contrast with Burma and Thailand most of the time Sanskrit form is preferred. This was the result of the collapse of the administrative system of the Khmer Empire on the one hand. And the influence of Buddhism from Thailand from the thirteenth century on the other.

In view of all the data accumulated in the course of this research, the two prevailing theories which are formed one by Western scholars, one by local scholars should be reconsidered. That which proposed by Western scholar is that it was Hīnayāna, excluding Theravāda, which was first to reach Southeast Asia, following by Mahāyāna and culminating in the advent of the Theravāda Buddhism. And the latter proposed by local scholars is that Theravāda from the Aśokan reign was introduced first, followed by Mahāyāna and Brahmanism and finally the returning of Theravāda. What we discover is that these two evolutionistic paradigms of history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia set by Western scholars and local scholars are not in accordance with the data. In the former case, the paradigm may be applicable only in case of Cambodia, but not in other areas. In certain areas such as Central Burma and Central Thailand, Theravāda Buddhism had been flourishing as early as the fourth century

onward. It might have been there even before that century, since by the fourth century we already have the "quotation" inscriptions from the Pāli tripiṭakas in the Pyu and Dvāravatī traditions which occupied the areas mentioned. And this Pali tradition showed every sign of continuity as a prevailing creed of the areas up to the present time. Our discovery is thus opposite to Luce's statement as well as Saddhatissa's quoted in the introduction.

And when one write a history of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia, one cannot neglect its earlier history. It is not acceptable to start the account of Theravāda Buddhism in Burma from the reign of Aniruddha. And it is equally not correct to begin a history of Buddhism in Thailand from the reign of King Rāmkhamhaeng. We purpose that history of a religion should not be studied and periodized according to a history of a nation. A history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia should not be confined with a history of a nation.

Nevertheless, the attempt to identify or pinpoint a school as the most flourishing one seems to be pointless, since in both epigraphical and archaeological data, there was certainly a tendency to practices different beliefs at the same time. To present the situation as the rising and the falling of this and that school is rather outmoded too. In the case of Burma, the Samaṇakuttakas were presented as flourishing before and then were ousted by, as N. Ray called, the "new and simpler faith",i.e. Theravāda Buddhism. In the case of Thailand they were Brāhmanism and Mahāyāna Buddhism which were superseded by Sinhalese Theravāda Buddhism. In fact, all these faiths, the indigenous ones included, should been studied on the same par, and not with the preconceived idea that the area is Theravāda Buddhist. Even nowadays when Buddhism is declared to be the state religion, we still find that in practice there are other practices and beliefs existing side by side. They may not be highly organized as Buddhism, but we cannot deny that they form crucial or even equal

part in everyday life of peoples of the so called Theravāda Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia.

One may even go further to state that in as much as we cannot say that Japan and China are Mahāyāna countries, Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand should not be called "Theravāda Buddhist countries." To describe these countries as such narrows our view concerning the religious life of the peoples of Southeast Asia. A broader perspective on the issue will help us understand the situation both past and present.

There are of course numerous gaps to be filled in the history of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. We have seen that we cannot identify in terms of sectarian affiliation Sanskrit inscriptions, because of the lack of substantial amount of the data. In all the data, epigraphical, archaeological as well as chronicles and legends, should be used with utmost caution. Each of them presents its own problem. The use of different scripts or art styles to identify the original place of Buddhism is inadequate. To identify a Buddha's image in the Gupta style as Mahāyāna, because of the concept that Mahāyāna was flourishing in North India at the time, is rather presumptuous. Religious conditions in Southeast Asia should not be limited only to identify the faith of a king, as we usually find in the studies of Khmer cultures in which much effort had been invested in pinpointing whether this or that king was a Śaivite, a Vaiṣṇava or a Buddhist. In the case that the data from the common people are available, they should be incorporate into the study as we have tried to do in this research. Since they provide us of how peoples expressed and thought about religions.

Comparative studies of "quotation" inscriptions found in the Pyu and the Dvāravtī traditions may yield some data on different reading of the Tripiṭaka. They are probably the earliest "manuscripts" in extend of the Pāli canon. Since there is no scholarly work on this subject, this research should be considered as a preparatory work so that one can understand the religious conditions in ancient Southeast Asia

which have been neglected in studying Buddhism of Southeast Asian countries. There are probably a great amount of data remaining to be discovered. And numerous problems of dating the scripts and finds and of interpreting them are yet to be settled.

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